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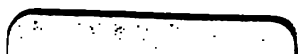
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CHINA PRESENT AND PAST

CHINA 84490
PRESENT AND PAST

*FOREIGN INTERCOURSE
PROGRESS AND RESOURCES
THE MISSIONARY QUESTION
ETC.*

Richard S. Gundry
BY
R. S. GUNDRY

AUTHOR OF "CHINA AND HER NEIGHBOURS"

WITH MAP

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1895

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“ Les Asiatiques sont toujours punis du dedain qu'ils ont pour les connaissances des Européens par le peu de profit que ce dedain même leur permet d'en tirer.”—ABEL REMUSAT.

“ The foundations of the Chinese state repose upon an all-pervading officialism, a bureaucracy trained through the national system of education to apply the maxims of government enunciated centuries before the dawn of the Christian era, and impelled by motives of self-interest to reject the introduction of all principles at variance with these venerable dogmas.”—MAYERS.

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INTRODUCTION.

A GENERAL impression seems to prevail that there will be a great forward movement, in China, as a consequence of the present war. The lesson which was only half learned in 1858, because she attributed her defeat to the superiority, solely, of foreign weapons, and which was obscured, in 1885, by the inconclusive results of the fighting in Formosa and Tongking—is being driven home, now, by her obvious inability to make head against a country whose extent and resources she knows to be incomparably less than her own. Rightly or wrongly, moreover, Japan is credited with a determination that the lesson shall reach home; that the pretensions which Western Powers have been willing to demolish gradually, by the logic of experience and fact, shall be swept finally into the limbo of the past to which they belong, and that China shall be brought to range herself alongside Japan in the path of reorganization and reform.

The question may be regarded, like most others, from different points of view. There are those who applaud and encourage the island kingdom in its self-imposed task; and there are those who condemn it as the author of an unprovoked war, which they consider as likely to shatter, as to amend, a vast empire held together by the very civilization which

it is desired to transmute. An estimate of the progress actually achieved, and of the forces which are making for and against further change, may help us to judge towards which scale the balance of sympathy should incline; for Western Powers can hardly fail to interest themselves in a settlement that may profoundly modify the conditions of trade and residence in the Far East.

I have been tempted, accordingly, to supplement my previous endeavour to exhibit China's relations with her Neighbours, by examining the extent to which she has been influenced by her Visitors.

One who has had more opportunities, perhaps, than any other foreigner, of perceiving the inner working of Chinese politics, has demurred, when asked to record his impressions, that the perpetual obligation to explain facts and allusions by the light of Chinese characteristics tends to render the task encyclopædic. The present inquiry makes no pretence to be so comprehensive. I have endeavoured only to throw up into relief certain incidents in foreign intercourse, certain aspects of industrial progress, and certain features in Chinese character and customs, which may enable us to note the progress actually made, and to discern the nature of the limitations that have prevented further advance.

Several of the chapters have been already published, as separate essays, in the *Monthly Reviews*; these have been supplemented, occasionally, by extracts from former communications to the *Times*; and I hasten to express my acknowledg-

ments of the courtesy with which the proprietors have consented, in each case, to the republication. Others are published, here, for the first time.

The first two chapters, which are expanded from an article written for the *Westminster Review* at the time the present Emperor assumed the reins of power, trace the change that has taken place in China's foreign relations since Lord Macartney had his famous audience of Kienlung, and since Lord Amherst was expelled, twenty-five years later, from Yuen-ming-yuen, because he would not be hustled into the presence of Kiaking. The arrogance implied in the Court Regulations for the reception of tributary envoys, at that period, may enable us to gauge the change implied in the reception of foreign ministers, last November—and again on New Year's day—in the Imperial Palace at Peking.

It has been suggested, by Oriental students, that the China of half a century ago preserved for us a type of the haughty vanity, the almost superhuman despotism, implied in the assumption of heavenly delegation by the great Eastern monarchies of old. A Rameses or a Sennacherib assumed to be acting by divine instruction when he set out to ravage Western Asia. Absolute monarchies are prone to develop conceit, and the tendency is encouraged by unquestioned superiority to all around. The very title, Tien-Tze, Son of Heaven, implies universal suzerainty; and Chinese Mandarins have been known to admit, in friendly conversation, that they still held this old doctrine that the earth is the Emperor's

domain, and all its people his subjects. To make war on China was consequently to rebel, and to claim audience of the Hwangte without a ceremonial implying submission was inadmissible and absurd. Such traditions become a matter of faith and, like most faiths, die hard. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that a reception of foreign envoys in the Imperial Palace, without the kotow, would have seemed to a Chinaman impossible, a century ago. And there is a degree of interest—if it is only archæological—in noting the assumption as well as the retreat. The reception of last November marks the abandonment of pretensions that were at their zenith when a Grand Duke of Muscovy went to Karakorum, to do homage to Genghiz Khan; but if old creeds keep a hold, still, among the *pagani* of Tuscany, we need hardly be surprised if it takes time for the new conception to penetrate Hunan.

Arrogance based solely on military power may be lowered, with comparative ease, by military defeat; but the arrogance of China was based on a conviction of universal superiority—not, perhaps, of arms; for, in theory, the Confucianist looks down upon arms as beneath the dignity of a man of culture—but of arts, literature, and civilization. Every Chinaman aspires to take a literary degree, and almost every literate aspires to an official career. But the Competitive Examinations through which the way lies are based exclusively on the lore of the past. A conception of all that is implied by an assumption

that the acme of wisdom has been reached, may enable us to appreciate the largeness of the admissions—made by Prince Kung in 1866, and by Prince Chun in 1887—that Western science must be studied, and mathematics introduced into the Competitive Examinations, if Chinamen were to hold their own in competition with the new forces with which they had come in contact. The language of the memorials in which that new departure is advised is so characteristic that I have reproduced them textually, in an appendix, from the *North-China Herald's* translations of the *Peking Gazette*; and regret, only, that I cannot lay my hand on others in which the movement was defended and fiercely assailed.

The chapters in which they are reviewed are based on a paper written for the *Westminster Review*, shortly after the Government's second attempt to persuade the literati to accept the innovation. It was, I confess, by a somewhat academic interest that I was led to collate Prince Kung's characteristic assertion—that knowledge emanated originally from China, and was developed in the inventive minds of Europeans—with Abel-Remusat's interesting dissertation on the possible effects of the Mongol irruption in breaking down the barriers between East and West. Yet the resemblance—between conclusions assumed in one case, and deduced in the other—is sufficiently remarkable to deserve note.

It is not unlikely that the same conditions which have limited educational progress have contributed

to stunt mechanical invention ; for the Chinese do really seem to have hit upon almost every mechanical conception, but to have stopped so soon as they had met the immediate want. They understood the properties of the compass, yet never got beyond the construction of junks. They knew gunpowder long before it was known in the West, yet bows and arrows still figure in their military examinations. They are supposed to have given Europe the idea of printing, yet the chief edition of the *Peking Gazette* is still printed from wooden blocks. They had cards and chess. There are records of a certain rebel having invented a way of propelling boats by wheels, which gave him an advantage, in manœuvring, over the Imperial fleet ; and Cantonese boatmen seem to have evolved a similar idea, to facilitate the passenger traffic on the Pearl River to-day. The very cartoons vilifying missionaries indicate a knowledge of planchette. I saw described, not long ago, a toy which was an embryo telephone. If Yü did not perform the feats of hydraulic engineering which the Classics describe, the legend of his labours may still incline us to admit that the Chinese had begun, before the days of Abraham, to attempt the drainage of the Great Plain.

The chapter on the Yellow River may convey an impression of the forces with which they have had to grapple, and of the limitations as well as the effectiveness of the skill they have brought to bear. Written originally in the *Westminster Review*, at the time of the last great outflow in 1887, the narra-

tive has been prolonged to include the record of Wu Ta-cheng's victory over the unruly stream. The disconnection of the episode may perhaps be pardoned in view of the illustrations it affords; for it shows us a Government supposed to be laxly organized, grappling with an immense disaster so efficiently that the Ministers of foreign charity refrained from meddling; a Government supposed to be devoid of energy, devoting millions to purposes of repair; and—underlying and thwarting its purpose—a mass of incapacity and corruption that may fairly stagger us by its heartlessness and extent. The *Peking Gazette* teems with memorials and decrees on the subject, from which I have been tempted to reproduce one, in which the man who succeeded in closing the breach proposes to organize a Board of capable Surveyors, to draw plans and prepare data for the future management of the stream. Yet a Government which had just lavished millions on the work, and had recently penned an edict advocating the introduction of mathematics into the Examinations, simply snubs the proposal. Damage irreparable and incalculable had been inflicted; the loss of life had been immense, the misery caused inestimable; but Chinese patience and industry had triumphed in the end; the normal degree of control had been regained, and the survivors would gradually resume tillage of the reclaimed land: the time of the Reactionaries had come, and the burst of energy had been spent. Alterations meant a presumptuous interference with

a system that had been proved efficacious, again and 'again: efficacious to provide fields for speculation, as well as to restrain the unruly cause of so much disaster. The river had broken out before; it would break out, doubtless, again. Let the next generation see to it! the present had done its work.

The first two chapters of the section in which I have endeavoured to review the industrial position, and to trace the story of the progress actually made, are based upon a paper read before the British Association, and published subsequently in the *Fortnightly Review*, in 1889. It was a moment when China was expected, as she has been so often expected, to make a great forward move. Decrees had been issued in favour of educational reform, in favour of railways and of mines. Telegraphs were being extended over the country. Great arsenals and dockyards had been constructed at various important centres. Schools which had been inaugurated in connexion with them, for the purpose especially of training naval cadets, had the ulterior advantage of teaching much that was altogether outside the Chinese curriculum. The Emperor had just come of age, and the way had been smoothed for him to move forward if the fates were propitious.—That things, even in China, do move, is proved by the fact that not only have the statistics had to be entirely recast, but the article has had to be largely re-written, to meet changes that have occurred even in five years. China has been placed in telegraphic communication with

Europe, across Central Asia, by a junction with the Russian land lines on the Amoor, and is about being placed in communication with Calcutta by a junction with the Indian lines near Bhamo. The tentative railway begun by Li Hung-chang has been prolonged to Shan-hai-kwan; and a short line has been constructed in Formosa, to connect the capital, Taipeh, with the port of Kelung. An impulse has been given to steam filatures; and if India and Ceylon have gained an increasing ascendancy over China tea, the closing of the Indian mints has given an impulse to cotton manufacture, in the Far East, which threatens serious consequences to English industry and trade.

Taking the average coinage of the previous ten years at Rx. 10,000,000, the effect of that decision was to throw 34,000,000 oz. of silver, annually, out of use, and the repeal of the Sherman Act excluded 54,000,000 oz. more. The immediate effect was to widen by 10*d.* an ounce the divergence between silver and gold, and to stimulate, *pro tanto*, the manufacture of yarn and cloth, in China, out of the abundant cotton which she can herself produce. Five mills have been already added to the single exemplar which Li Hung-chang had been slowly setting up; machinery for others has been ordered; and the Statistical Commissioner of Chinese Customs makes the significant remark that a nation whose cheap labour excites so much alarm in Occidental countries towards which it inclines to migrate, may cause greater consternation still when it takes the

form of silver-paid competition, on its own ground, with the gold-paid workmen of the West.

A perception of the Chinese educational system, and of the great gulf which separates Chinese from Western thought, may enable us to conceive why it is that progress has been slow, and how great are the obstructive forces which the Progressists have to overcome. If mining and railway enterprise have been stunted, it is owing mainly to the conservatism of the *literati*, which finds concrete expression in the pedantry of the administrative Boards, and to the jealousy and corruption of officials who insist on having a finger in every pie. If the tea trade has been revolutionized, and China silk commands the lowest price in the market, it is because the Authorities over-tax produce, as well as because growers will not improve production.

I question the fairness of holding the Imperial Government responsible for all shortcomings.

No one has, I believe, been yet able to put a finger on the exact spot where power in China lies. It would be safer, probably, to assume that no absolute power exists; but that political acts are the outcome of the ascendancy of a party or a clique. The Regency of the Empress-Dowager was unquestionably a living force; the progressive decrees that have been noted were issued during her tenure of power; and the tone of one in favour of currency reform is such as might have been used by Elizabeth Tudor towards ministers who had thwarted her will. But she

has been subject to opposing influences, and has not been uniformly wise. The failure of Prince Kung's education scheme, in 1867, is said to have been her work ; she having yielded, then, to the influence of Wo-jen, a literate of Mongol descent, who led the van of the Conservative attack. She is said to have been supported also, in this attitude, by the father of the reigning Emperor, Prince Chun, who was for many years an opponent of Li Hung-chang and violently hostile to the introduction of new ways. But parties and influences change, even in Peking. Prince Chun was converted by Li Hung-chang, during a visit which he was induced to pay to the coast. It was shortly after this visit that there were published the Progressive decrees to which reference has been made; and the Empress' most trusted counsellor, since that prince's death, has been the great Viceroy who is credited with every inspiration in favour of reform.

But individual will, however theoretically autocratic, cannot avail suddenly against a system,—more especially when that system has its roots in national life ; and we may take it that even a strong Emperor would have difficulty in over-ruling the collective conservatism of the literati which finds authoritative expression in the Boards at Peking. The resulting inconsistencies are so remarkable that one may be tempted, at times, to think the Chinese mind is so constituted as to let light in only by chinks. The very Viceroy, for instance, who tore up the Woosung railway, memorialized the throne

in favour of eliminating bows and arrows from the military examinations! Here was a glimmer of light, but the Boards promptly extinguished it, by advising the Empress to adhere to the traditions of the past; and the present Governor of Kiangse is the first who has ventured, since, to revive the idea, by inviting military licentiates—within his own province—to discard bows and gymnastics in favour of foreign weapons and drill! What is true, in this respect, of the Imperial circle is true of individual mandarins. Li Hung-chang was able to introduce war-ships and foreign weapons; but—whether for lack of will, ability or good fortune—he has not been able to revolutionize the military system, or to replace venal placemen by competent officers. Some of the greatest provincial satraps have been memorializing, for years, in favour of railways; yet we see how little has been done. The very man, on the other hand, who justified the destruction of the first Shanghai telegraph, in a puerile despatch about geomancy, bought the plant of the Woosung railway, ten years later, when he perceived an opportunity of reconstructing it in Formosa, where—as a sort of outlying experiment—it might escape the antagonism of reactionary colleagues. The hindrances in the way of progress may perhaps be gathered from these illustrations, and from the political and social conditions which I have endeavoured to depict, more easily than from elaborate dissertation.

But the ultimate obstacle of all is the corruption

and nepotism of the official class. The maxims of government, in China, are admirable: it is the administrative system which has been stunted and distorted. The scale of salaries is absurd. No mandarin can exist on his official pay; and the "family" system surrounds him with sycophants who expect to be provided with places at the public expense, while the decentralization and laxity of the executive allow an elasticity of collection and account that permit him to supplement his own salary, and enable his connexions and underlings to "evolve" theirs, out of the chaos. People have been known to over-estimate their own value, even in the West; and Chinese officials, who have the opportunity of fixing—within elastic limits—their own gains, are apt to fall into the same error. The moral axioms of the sages get distorted. Love of peace becomes such a conviction of the impossibility of war that the colonel of a battalion keeps it at half strength, and retains, consequently, half its pay. An ironclad run on the same principle is apt to prove inefficient if expected to fight. Reserves of ammunition are likely to run short, even if the official delegated to buy rifles has not concluded that muskets would be as useful as Mausers, in view of the fact that a problematical enemy must be deterred, by consciousness of inferiority, from attacking a nation so great in the conviction of its superior civilization and size.

These "limitations" of education and finance have operated to prevent the education of officers

in the service of modern war, and to emasculate the courage of the "men with muskets"—irregularly armed, irregularly paid, and ill led—who have been arrayed against a well-trained foe. They have operated to neutralize a costly fleet, to hinder mining, and thwart railway enterprise. A Chinese literate is *de toute disponibilité*; a Chwang-yuan, or Senior Wrangler, is supposed to be as capable of commanding an army as of governing a province; and the principle extends, equally, to the assumption that he is a born railway director and mining engineer. To allow a foreign engineer to work a mine or construct a railway, independently, would be to fly in the face of a system designed expressly to provide rewards for literary talent. It has been pleaded in excuse for English statesmen, of a not long past age, that they only took what came in their way. It is useless to expect clean-handedness in China, where the temptations are far greater. Some rare men there are. The Viceroy, Shen Pao-cheng, who immortalized himself by tearing up the Woosung railway, had to be buried at the public expense. The same thing happened, not long ago, in the case of a Governor of Shantung. A reputation for probity is one of the secrets of the influence of Chang Chi-tung, whose name is frequently mentioned in connection with current events, and to whom frequent allusion will be made in the course of this work. But they are exceptions to an opposite rule. Li Hung-chang's repute is not so high. He has had great opportunities, and has

accumulated great wealth. Still he has not been reputed avaricious. The mill-stone about his neck is nepotism ; and of the corruption of others he has been held over-tolerant. In ability and perception, however, he is pre-eminent. He must not be judged by an European standard, because he is trammelled, necessarily, by his training and surroundings. He may not have carried his perception to the height of the scientific necessities of the day, but there is scarcely a need that he has not seen and tried to supply, nor an enterprise in which he has not been thwarted by the obstruction of political opponents, the conceit and ignorance of placemen, the venality of his *entourage*, and the inherent defects of the system with which he has had to deal.

The chapters on Chinese currency, and on the hindrances to trade on the West River, may further illustrate these peculiarities. Both are published for the first time—excepting the history of the British dollar, which was written some months ago for the *Chamber of Commerce Journal*, and the picture of reviving commerce on the Yangtze which is transcribed from former correspondence to the *Times*. A traditional interest attaches to the trade of South-west China, which is being striven for by various competing routes ; and the evident tendency of Yunnan trade to find an outlet across Tongking may lend additional weight to the project of the Hong Kong Chamber of Commerce for bringing it back, down the West River, to Canton. Waterways—natural and artificial, both rivers and canals

—are numerous in China, and they are utilized to a degree which is limited only by two causes—the exclusion of steam and the multiplication of inland Customs stations. The chapter in question may illustrate both these shortcomings and the method of cure. Railways, in a territory as large as Western Europe, will take time—as they have taken in India—even when once a serious start is made. The introduction of steam on inland waterways would go far to expedite the development of the trade and resources of the country, in the meantime.

If sound finance is the basis of good government, it follows that there is small hope for improvement in China, unless means can be devised of purifying the present system. The better class of Chinese merchants are well aware of the corruption and incapacity of the officials, to whom they know that China's troubles are due. The Emperor is credited with good will, and recent events appear to have opened his eyes. He has issued a decree declaring that corruption is at the bottom of Chinese disasters, and declaring his purpose that generals shall not, in future, misappropriate their soldiers' pay. But that is only a single phase; and it may well be doubted whether the will of one physically delicate lad can avail to purify the Augæan system, any more than it can evoke skilled officers and well-drilled men, without foreign teaching and help. I have ventured to suggest that the leaven may be found in the Foreign Customs ser-

vice. More skilled financiers might possibly be imported ; but they would be viewed with a degree of jealousy that would be less active in the case of men already in the Chinese service. There is no insuperable reason why a Foreign Revenue Commissioner should not be stationed alongside a Provincial Treasurer, as well as alongside a Superintendent of Customs ; and it is only by the application of the same principle of liberal salaries and exact accounts which has made the Maritime Customs a model service, that reform can possibly be evolved out of the methods which constitute China, at present, a happy hunting-ground for an unscrupulous bureaucracy.

But reform must be undertaken—when it is begun—on a comprehensive scale. It will be perceived from the chapter in which I have outlined the growth of the service over which Sir Robert Hart so ably presides, that one effect of the innovation has been to divert to Peking a proportion of revenues that used to be available for provincial finance. I believe that here is to be found one explanation of a certain increase of taxation within the period of foreign intercourse. The provincial authorities have invented means to replace the lost income ; and that, under the Chinese fiscal system, means levying much more than the amount required. It would be a mistake, therefore, to clean out the stable by stalls. The whole system should be taken in hand together ; and I am persuaded that opposition will be found to centre less

in the Imperial circle, than in the great Chinese official class which has been educated to consider the country its natural preserve.

Of the two chapters which deal with the missionary question, the first was published in the *National Review*, at the time of the riots in the Yangtze Valley ; and the second in the *Fortnightly*, with a view to explain more exactly the causes of the enmity by which they were inspired. The first paper has been varied by the excision of much that had temporary application, and by the inclusion of portions of earlier letters to the *Times*, recording the first outbreaks of an antagonism that has since found chronic expression.

Attempts to interfere with a people's faith are apt to be resented more wrathfully than interference with custom. The Chinese have been frequently accused of indifferentism, and it might be expected that Missionary enterprise would excite the less opposition, on that account. The error arises from a mistaken conception of the national creed. Buddhism sits on them lightly enough. It is the cult of Ancestors which has deep root in the national life. They are superstitious, moreover, as we still were three centuries ago : they believe in geomancy ; and precisely in so far as these respective convictions are shocked, may missionaries be considered pioneers of antagonism rather than of friendly intercourse. If English people added, to a conviction of the superiority of their own creed, a belief that the curled eaves of a two-storeyed Chinese edifice would

bring them bad luck such as Tenterden steeple brought to a section of Kent, they would probably heave whole bricks at a Chinese missionary who conceived that he could not conveniently teach Buddhism without building a Chinese-shaped temple, and a Chinese-shaped house, in their midst. Yet that is, *mutatis mutandis*, what Western missionaries do in China; while denouncing, besides, the cult which is the keystone of the social fabric.

The articles on Ancestor Worship and the Goddess of Mercy, which are reproduced from the *Fortnightly* and *National Reviews*, may throw a ray of light on a side of the Chinese temperament which is often dismissed as less comprehensible than even its obtuseness to the charm of Western civilization. Yet the fisherman who appeals to Kwon-yin should have the sympathy of the Mediterranean sailor, who has ever prayed to Our Lady for help; and it may illustrate the position further, to remark that the Mandarin who was once seen turning out a statue, to make room for himself and his retinue in a certain temple, would have shrunk with horror from the irreverence implied in displacing an ancestral tablet.

English treaties with China did not contemplate that missionaries should establish themselves any and everywhere in the interior. It would have appeared incongruous, probably, to the Government of the day, that they should have privileges from which merchants were debarred; and not incongruous only, but injudicious. For the

differences between European and Asiatic systems of law and punishment are such that it has been held necessary, in providing for the residence of our people in Eastern lands, to stipulate that they shall be amenable only before English Consuls, and to English law. The system works well; but, in so far as it presupposes the vicinity of a Consul, it precludes the rights of free residence which European countries mutually admit.

The chapter on Judicial Torture, which has also appeared in the *Fortnightly Review*, may help to explain why the idea of residence in the interior seemed incompatible, even if Western Governments had been prepared to exact the concession. And Chinese civil law is as nearly primitive, in its conceptions, as the criminal code. The Emperor Kanghi is said to have even encouraged magistrates to mulct suitors well, in order to discourage litigation! Almost everyone connected with the Far East resents the surrender of extra-territorial privileges in Japan. Foreign residents, there, allege the vast difference in conception between Western and Eastern government and ways: an Englishman being accustomed to a degree of liberty which is foreign to the Oriental imagination. In protesting, therefore, against being handed over to the jurisdiction of a people who can be guilty of the ruthlessness displayed at Port Arthur, they contend that it would have been time enough to entertain the project when the juridical reforms which are admitted to be essential have been finally completed, and tested by working experience.

But Japan has carried these reforms a long way. China, on the contrary, has given no sign of a conception that they are required ; and here is an unquestionable difficulty in the way of that extended intercourse which the Western world demands, and which would benefit the Chinese people as well as foreign trade. It is impossible to subject Europeans to the jurisdiction of Courts where the administration of justice is so crude, and it is equally difficult to require that they shall be allowed to live—as we do insist, nevertheless, that missionaries shall be allowed to live—scores, and possibly hundreds, of miles away from a Consular station. Sir Edmund Hornby, who was formerly Chief Judge of the British Supreme Court at Shanghai, suggests that the difficulty might be met by appointing, in each province, a high Chinese official as protector of foreigners. I venture to extend the idea by suggesting that this officer might be given an European colleague, and that the two might constitute a Mixed Court, having its headquarters in the provincial capital, but empowered to go periodically on circuit to places where foreigners are established. The time is, at any rate, near when some change will have to be devised. The incongruity of forbidding merchants to do what missionaries are upheld in doing by display of force, must force itself upon Western diplomacy and public opinion.

It will be evident, nevertheless, that the terms “opening up the country” and “free intercourse with the interior” involve considerations beyond the

mere exaction of Imperial acquiescence. British subjects are privileged already, under the ninth article of the treaty of Tientsin, "to travel for their pleasure or for purposes of trade to all parts of the interior, under passports issued by their consuls and countersigned by the local authorities." They are allowed to hire boats for the carriage of their baggage or merchandise; and are to be handed over to the nearest consul, without maltreatment, in case they offend against the law. But the accommodation at Chinese inns scarcely encourages travel for purposes of pleasure; and no foreigner could compete with the Chinese themselves, in the sort of commercial travelling which this clause permits. The question of residence wears a different aspect. The presence of foreign merchants at cities in the interior would tend to check illegal exactions on merchandise *en route*. A beginning might be made at once, by admitting native agencies; ¹ and partnerships between foreign and Chinese merchants, for such purposes, might be facilitated and encouraged.

Men familiar with the Far East, who remember former promises and disappointments, will be found to deprecate any anticipation of a transfiguration scene such as has been enacted in Japan. The Chinese temperament is opposed to political and intellectual somersaults. Either under stress,

An attempt made by Mr. Herbert Dent to establish such an agency at Fatshan, which was frustrated by the provincial authorities of Kwangtung, is referred to more fully in a subsequent chapter.

however, of foreign coercion, or from willingness to adopt reforms whose efficacy is being so practically demonstrated, movement there will doubtless be. Current events must break the half-slumber which has come over foreign intercourse, as well as the deeper slumber in which the Chinese have themselves indulged. Freer intercourse with the interior and with the people, the opening of navigable waterways, larger rights of residence and trade will be inevitable consequences of such an awakening; and special judicial provisions, as well as reform of the fiscal and juridical system, may gradually follow. The moment has seemed opportune, therefore, for taking stock of the situation, as a man may halt and reflect at a parting of the ways. I venture to repeat my protest that it is not pretended that the review has been exhaustive. My object will have been fully reached if it is thought that the facts collated tend to elucidate, in some degree, the Chinese problem: To explain the limitations of the past, and to indicate the lines which future progress may conceivably take.

FOREIGN INTERCOURSE.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS.

It is significant, perhaps, of the extent to which the Imperial prestige has lately suffered, that the Audience which was accorded to the foreign representatives at Peking, last November, within the precincts of the imperial palace, passed almost without comment in the English Press. Yet the incident was dramatic in respect both of the occasion and the event. The occasion was the sixtieth birthday of the Empress Dowager who, as the junior of the two Empresses-Regent, played a chief part in the government of China from the death of the Emperor Hienfung to the coming of age of Kwangsu. Immense preparations had been made to celebrate the occasion. Nearly £10,000,000 had been collected from various sources—donations by individual officials and contributions by provincial governments—to pay the cost of the intended festivities. Miles of streets in Peking were to have been decorated with costly ornaments, jewels, and draperies lent by great mandarins for

the occasion. The Board of Ceremonies had been occupied for months in arranging details of the programme, and the *Peking Gazette* had teemed with edicts and reports. It was suggested, indeed, that Japan chose that moment to put forward her pretensions in Corea, because she believed that the Imperial Court was so absorbed in preparation that it would yield anything rather than have the ceremony disturbed. War, at any rate, supervened. At the Empress's own wish large instalments of the sums which had been appropriated were diverted to the military chest. Disaster overtook the Chinese arms. Defeat after defeat caused growing alarm in the Imperial circle. The incongruity of festal celebration, in circumstances of such grave political anxiety, made itself increasingly felt—till, by an edict of the 25th September, the preparations were formally countermanded; and little seems to have remained of all the splendid pageant that had been intended but certain half-finished decorations, and the perfunctory visits of congratulation amid which that of the foreign representatives stands out with a political significance hardly less remarkable than the incidents of the campaign. For it was the first time that an audience had ever been given by a Chinese Emperor, within the precincts of the Palace, without the kotow.¹ Twenty years ago the import of such an incident would have been consi-

¹ It is scarcely necessary to explain that the kotow consists in going down three times on the hands and knees and knocking the forehead on the floor thrice each time.

dered great. Under ordinary circumstances it would have been welcomed, even to-day, as marking a final surrender of traditional pretensions, and as pregnant with promise for future advance. But the whole fabric of Chinese prestige has been so shaken, by the blows administered by Japan, that a mere ceremonial passes as of little account. The whole political landscape seems to have been projected forward—diplomatic and commercial intercourse alike—and precipitated towards a solution on broader lines than had seemed possible so long as progress was sought to be attained by diplomatic pressure.

The audience constitutes, nevertheless, an historical landmark, and suggests a brief review of our diplomatic relations since Lord Macartney travelled from Taku to Peking, with the words “tribute bearer” inscribed on the flags of the boats and carts in which the embassy was conveyed.

Different peoples require to be judged by different standards, just as certain heavenly bodies require special methods of observation. The movement of a planet can be discerned easily enough, but it is only by means of fine threads drawn across the object-glass that it is possible to detect that the so-called fixed stars move at all. Japan goes ahead at a hand-gallop; her progress is visible to the unassisted European eye; whereas China moves so slowly that it is only by using a sort of political parallax that we can be sure she does progress. We need to widen, in her case, the

basis of observation. Instead of judging by years we must judge by periods, and a comparison with the traditional ceremonies enforced at the Chinese Court before its vanity had been shaken or its attitude of political superiority assailed, may enable us to appreciate the extent of the change.

All Asiatic sovereigns are pretentious. It is not long since British envoys were required to take off their boots in the presence of the King of Burmah, as Moses was desired to put his shoes from off his feet on holy ground, and as an Indian servant still leaves his slippers on the threshold when approaching his master. Until quite recently, the Mikado could only be approached in an attitude of humility as abject as that required at the Court of Peking. But there was, perhaps, more justification for the assumption of the Hwangte. The superiority of China over the neighbouring nations with whom she had been acquainted was so manifest that it was not unnatural she should conceive herself equally superior to the rest of the world, and her emperor, consequently, superior to all other kings. All who sent missions to her were, accordingly, tributaries; the presents they brought were tribute; and the Emperor replied by issuing patents of investiture to their kings. The rest of the world was, in the opinion of the vast majority of Chinamen, of little significance. They considered, at any rate, that their Emperor's dominion virtually extended over the whole, and so failed to distinguish the relations or duties of other nations towards him from their own.

These ideas existed in full force at the time of Lord Macartney's mission to Kienlung; and his embassy is claimed as "tributary" in the Chinese records, which give a list of the "tribute" he presented, and expressly state that the Emperor gave letters and gifts in return.¹ Till the middle of the present century China had, indeed, no foreign relations in our own acceptation of the term. Envoys from Constantinople or, at any rate, from Antioch, had visited her in the days of the Byzantine Empire; Arabs, Dutch, Portuguese and English had traded on her coasts, and emissaries from some of these nations had appeared at Peking. Mention is made, in the Court records, of "tribute-bearing" missions from the Dutch as early as 1664; a King of the West named A-feng-su (presumably Alfonso of Portugal) sent envoys in 1669; another "King of the West" sent an envoy (perhaps Cardinal Mezzabarba, who presented a letter from the Pope in reference to the disputes between Jesuit and Dominican missionaries) in 1720. And all these seem to have complied with the Chinese ceremonial. A Russian envoy who visited Peking during the reign of Kanghi is said, indeed, to have refused the kotow unless a pact were made for its return, upon occasion, to his own sovereign; but Father Ripa complains that a pre-

¹ The idea conveyed being at least of honour conferred, if not of honorific investiture. *Vide* "China and her Tributaries." *China Review*, September, 1883.

vious envoy, named Ismailoff, was kept prostrate a needless length of time !

There had, at any rate, been no sustained attempt to assert equality or to keep up diplomatic intercourse on that footing. It is, indeed, no exaggeration to affirm that, until within the last quarter century, the very idea of a foreign ruler approaching the Emperor otherwise than as an inferior would have seemed ridiculous in Chinese eyes. There was "one sun in the heaven, and one Emperor on the earth." The very title Tien-tze, "son of heaven," implies universal dominion. But nothing can explain, so clearly as the traditional "regulations for the reception of tributary envoys," the full extent of the arrogance they imply ; and the very quaintness of the picture may, perhaps, excuse its reproduction from the pages of the *China Review*, to which it was contributed some years ago by Mr. Jamieson, H.M.'s present Consul at Shanghai.

"If there should happen to occur one of the days when the Emperor holds Court, as birthday, New Year's Day, or one of the festivals, the envoys will have audience along with the officers of the Court, as follows :—The Guest Master and the director in charge of the envoys will conduct them to the south gate of the Palace, where they will wait outside in one of the waiting-rooms. They enter by the Chentu Gate of the Taiho Pavilion, where the Emperor gives audience. After the officers in attendance at the Court have finished their ceremonial, the envoys will be conducted to the open courtyard below the steps of the pavilion, where they will be placed at the foot of the file of officials on the west side. At the word of command they will kneel and kotow nine times.

"If no Court is being held at the time, the Board will memorialize and take his Majesty's pleasure in regard to an audience. If it should be granted, one of the presidents of the Board of Ceremonies will, at the appointed time, conduct the envoys, who must be in the Court dress of their country, to the palace, where they will wait outside. His Majesty, in ordinary costume, will enter one or other of the audience halls, as may be convenient, attended by the Ministers of the Presence, the Ministers of the Body Guard, and the Ministers of the Household, arranged as in ordinary ceremonial. The President of the Board of Ceremonies will then conduct the envoys, attended by their interpreters, as far as the courtyard, on the west side of which they will kneel and kotow nine times. This being ended they will be conducted up the west steps, attended by one interpreter, to the door of the pavilion, outside of which they will kneel. His Majesty will ask in a soothing manner after their welfare. The President of the Board will communicate the question to the interpreter, who will pass it on to the chief envoy. The envoy will reply, the interpreter will translate the reply to the president, and the president will report it to his Majesty. The ceremony being ended, they will retire.

"If it is desired to treat the envoys in a more favoured manner, the Manchu and Chinese officials who are on the roll of attendance for the day will assemble, wearing their embroidered robes, and take their positions on the right and left. The President of the Board of Ceremonies will conduct the envoys as far as the further part of the courtyard of the pavilion, where they will perform the obeisance as above. That being ended, he will conduct them up the west steps to the pavilion, which they will enter by the right door, attended by their interpreters. They will take up a position at the rear of the officials, forming on the right. After standing for a short space his Majesty will graciously direct that all be seated. The Ministers of the Imperial Guard, the Ministers of the Household, and all the officials on duty will kotow once and take their seats in order, after which the envoys will kneel and kotow once, and take their seats. His Majesty will then graciously order tea to be served. Tea will first be handed to his Majesty, upon which all will kneel and kotow. Tea will then be served to the Ministers and the envoys in order; all will kneel to receive it, and kotow once. The drinking being finished, all kneel

as before. His Majesty will then soothingly ask a question, which will be passed on by the President of the Board, and answered in the form and manner already stated. The ceremonies being ended, the President of the Board will conduct the envoys back to one of the waiting-rooms, where refreshments will be graciously provided by order of the Emperor. That being ended, the director in charge of the envoys will conduct them back to their residence."

It is a tribute to Kienlung's good sense as well as to Lord Macartney's bearing and diplomacy, that a reception on satisfactory terms was accorded in spite of these provisions; and few more interesting chapters have been written, in the history of our intercourse, than those in which Sir George Staunton¹ describes that first interview of a British envoy with the sovereign whom the Jesuit missionaries called the greatest monarch in the world, and the best literate in his Empire.

The question of the kotow came, of course, very early to the fore. The Emperor was at Zehol, but the Mandarins began speaking of it at Yueng-ming-yuen; trying, already, to induce Lord Macartney to "practise" it before "the screen"—a function which has, in Chinese eyes, the significance of personal homage.² Having no intention of performing the ceremony, he naturally declined the rehearsal, urging that the ceremonies practised by subjects were not to be expected from the repre-

¹ "An Authentic Account of an Embassy from the King of Great Britain to the Emperor of China." By Sir George Staunton, Bart. London, 1797.

² The King of Korea, for instance, kotows on receipt of an Imperial letter.

sentatives of Foreign Powers, and that he would incur serious responsibility if he did, in his representative character, anything that could be construed as an act of homage. He seems to have taken a leaf, however, out of the Russian book. The difficulty might be obviated if the Emperor would order an officer of the Court equal to himself in rank to perform, before a picture of his Britannic Majesty dressed in robes of State, the same ceremony that he was asked to perform before the Chinese Throne ! otherwise he must be guided by English custom. A people keenly alive to humour must have been tickled by the suggestion, how extravagant soever it may have seemed. Lord Macartney was asked what form of respect, then, he could consistently adopt ; and answered that on approaching his own sovereign he bent on one knee, and he was willing to demonstrate in the same manner his respectful sentiments towards the Emperor. The compromise was accepted ; an agreement being, not improbably, facilitated by the fact that the advent of the mission coincided with the Imperial birthday ; so that any concession in point of ceremonial might be obscured, in the eyes of the people, by the evidence of his arrival "from afar" on a visit of respect and congratulation. The interview was held in a great tent erected for the purpose in a garden of the Palace at Zehol ; and it is interesting to compare Sir George Staunton's account of the ceremony with the regulations that have been quoted.

“The Emperor, on his entrance into the tent, mounted the throne by the front steps consecrated to his use alone. The Chief Minister and two of the principal persons of the household were close to him, and always spoke to him upon their knees. The princes of his family, the tributaries and great officers of State being already arranged in their respective places in the tent, the President of the Board of Rites conducted Lord Macartney, who was attended by his page and Chinese interpreter, near to the foot of the throne.” The other gentlemen of the embassy, together with a great number of Mandarins and officers of inferior dignity, stood in the great opening of the tent, from whence most of the ceremonies could be observed. “The Ambassador, instructed by the President, held the large and magnificent square box of gold adorned with jewels, in which was enclosed His Majesty’s letter to the Emperor, between both hands lifted above his head, and in that manner ascending the few steps that led to the throne, and bending on one knee, presented the box with a short address to his Imperial Majesty who, graciously receiving the same with his own hands, placed it by his side and expressed, in a few courteous words, pleasure at the reception of the embassy and the presents.”

It is scarcely surprising, after what we have seen of Chinese pretension, to learn that “the Chinese considered this reception exceptionally honourable and distinguished;” the privilege of delivering credentials into the Emperor’s own hands

being especially remarked. The condescension seems, indeed, to have been too much for the Court historiographer, who alleges the intervention of a Minister. And here I venture to draw again on Mr. Jamieson for the Chinese version of the transaction :—

“In the 58th year of Kienlung (A.D. 1793) the English nation sent the envoy Ma-ko-er-ni and others to present tribute. His Majesty held court in a grand pavilion. The Ministers of the Grand Council and the Presidents of the Board of Ceremonies introduced the envoy, who respectfully presented the King’s letter on his knees. The Emperor ordered one of the Ministers of the Presence to receive it, which was done, and the document was handed up for the inspection of his Majesty.”

Englishmen will not be disposed to credit the Chinese record, in preference to Sir George Staunton’s; though it must be noted, in confirmation of its general accuracy, that there is no allegation of Lord Macartney’s kotowing, and that mention is even made of the well-known incident of the Emperor’s gift of a purse to his page!

After the ceremony came a banquet, not of the perfunctory kind prescribed in the regulations, but in the very society of the Emperor. Certain Burmese and Turkoman envoys having been introduced, “repeated nine times the most devout prostrations, and been quickly dismissed,” Lord Macartney and his companions were conducted to cushions on the left¹ of the Emperor, about mid-way down the tent, while the princes,

¹ In China the left is the place of honour.

tributaries, and dignitaries of the Court were seated according to their rank, nearer to or farther from the throne. "A table was laid for every two guests. As soon as all were seated these were uncovered, and exhibited a sumptuous banquet. On each was a pyramid of dishes or bowls containing viands and fruits in vast variety. A table was placed likewise before the Emperor, who seemed to partake heartily of the fare set before him. . . . The dishes and cups were carried to him with hands uplifted over the head in the same manner as the gold box had been borne by the Ambassador." The Emperor sent dishes from his own table during the repast, and his attentions culminated, at the close, in calling his guests to the throne and presenting with his own hands a cup of Chinese wine.¹

The Embassy arrived, as we have seen, on the occasion of Kienlung's eighty-third birthday; and Sir George's description of a "prostration before the screen" on the festal day may be quoted in illustration of that ceremony:—

"The festival really lasted several days. The first was consecrated to the purpose of rendering a solemn, sacred, and devout homage to the Supreme Majesty of the Emperor. This ceremony was no longer performed in a tent, nor did it partake of the nature of a banquet. The princes, tributaries, ambassadors, great officers of state, and principal Mandarins were assembled in a vast hall, and upon particular notice were introduced into an inner building bearing the semblance of a temple. It was chiefly furnished with

¹ The Emperor put a cup of warm wine in H.E.'s hands, with the remark that the weather was cold. This was regarded as an enormous condescension.

great instruments of music . . . to the sound of which a slow and solemn hymn was sung by eunuchs, who had such a command over their voices as to resemble the sound of musical glasses at a distance. . . . During the performance, and at particular signals nine times repeated, all the persons present prostrated themselves nine times, except the Ambassador and his suite, who made a profound obeisance. But he whom it was meant to honour continued, as if it were in imitation of the Deity, invisible the whole time."

The whole story tends to show that, even if the Embassy were regarded as tribute-bearing in its degree, the Mandarins had the wit to perceive that it was not to be treated as dependent in the sense of an Annamese or Liuchiuan mission; while their reception of the Dutch, in the following year, proved that they were no less willing to encroach when they encountered a willingness to yield.

Van Braam's narrative¹ leaves, indeed, a sense of vexation—to use no stronger word—at the subserviency M. Titzing and his colleagues displayed. It is a record of kotowing. They kotow before the screen, upon arrival in Canton. They submit to call at the viceroy's palace, although they had been fairly told that he would not receive them, but would only send out a petty Mandarin to explain that it would be against custom to do so. They kotow to the Emperor on presenting their credentials: they have audience together with a Corean Envoy; they kotow when the Emperor sends them a present of

¹ "Authentic Account of the Embassy of the Dutch East India Company, &c., in the years 1794 and 1795. Taken from the journal of André Everard Van Braam."

a sturgeon, and accept the assurance that they are treated in this respect more favourably than Lord Macartney, who had had no such honour conferred upon him. It has been shrewdly suspected, indeed, that the Mandarins amused themselves by exacting these perpetual kotows ; and Sir John Davis' remark that "the wicked Mandarins laughed" at the exhibition, gives expression to the surmise. The mission was, in fact, sent at the instance of the Canton Viceroy to congratulate Kienlung on the sixtieth anniversary of his accession, and its members seem to have been willing to execute any programme which it pleased the Chinese to frame. Still, in their case as in that of their predecessors, Kienlung showed himself personally hospitable and courteous ; and Van Braam's narrative scarcely yields to Sir George Staunton's in the quaint interest of the festivities described.

The next striking landmark is the mission despatched by George IV., when Prince Regent, in 1816. Lord Amherst's instructions seem to have been similar to his predecessor's, but his experience was widely different. The behaviour of Kiaking, or that at least of his courtiers, was as rude as that of Kienlung had been considerate and polite. Having no mind for the long overland journey from Canton, Lord Amherst went, also, by sea to Tientsin where he was hospitably received, but where the question of the kotow was promptly raised. A screen had been arranged in the banqueting-room of the edifice to which he was conducted. Before it stood

“a table covered with yellow cloth, and supporting a vessel of smoking incense, the whole being symbolical of the presence of the Emperor.” Nearly two hours were spent, according to an historian¹ of the mission, in the endeavour to persuade him to kotow before this simulacrum; but his refusal at length prevailed, and the Chinese contented themselves with his promise to bow as often as they prostrated themselves. He “was placed accordingly, with Sir George Staunton, Mr. Ellis, and Mr. Morrison, immediately before it, having six Mandarins of high rank on his right hand, and the gentlemen of his suite behind him. At a signal given by an officer, the Mandarins fell on their knees, knocked their heads three times against the ground and then arose: a second and third time this signal was repeated, and a second and third time they knocked their heads against the earth; the Ambassador and the gentlemen of his suite bowing respectfully nine times.”

At Tungchow—the landing stage for Peking, whither they were carried in boats bearing the “Tribute-bearer” flag—they were met by Duke Ho, whom Mr. Abel describes as President of the Foreign Board; and the question of the kotow was again urged. The Chinese insisted; Lord Amherst refused. Ho “threatened to send him out of the Empire without seeing the Celestial face!”

¹ “Narrative, &c., &c., of Lord Amherst's Embassy to the Court of Peking.” By Clarke Abel, Chief Medical Officer, &c. London 1818.

Lord Amherst declared his readiness to depart : and his persistence at length prevailed. Word was brought that the Emperor would waive the kotow, and receive him on his own terms.

It was thought, naturally, that all difficulties were now removed ; but the possibilities of Chinese official insolence are without bounds. Kiaking was at Yuen-ming-yuen, and Lord Amherst was persuaded to start from Tungchow late in the afternoon, on the understanding that a halt would be made at Peking which is only a few miles distant. But he was carried past the walls, compelled to travel all night, and reached Yuen-ming-yuen only at dawn of day.

“ Arrived within a short distance of the Imperial Palace, his carriage was stopped by some Mandarins in their dresses of ceremony, who requested him to enter the Imperial Palace. His lordship at first refused, pleading fatigue and illness, and begging to be led to the quarters prepared for him ; but after repeated solicitations and assurances that he would only be detained to partake of refreshment, he alighted, and accompanied by a few of the gentlemen of his suite, passed through a multitude of Mandarins to the Palace.” The whole party were here pushed into a small room, which was at once crowded by Mandarins. “ Lord Amherst threw himself upon a bench, much exhausted by fatigue, watching, and agitation of mind but the Chinese would suffer no repose. In a few minutes the President of the Board of Works announced the Emperor’s desire to see him and the other Commissioners. Lord Amherst replied that fatigue, illness, and want of the necessary attire rendered compliance almost impossible, and requested that his Majesty would allow him that day to recover himself ; but his excuses were not received. The Emperor’s wish was again and again urged as not to be rejected, while his Excellency adhered to his remonstrance. . . . Finding their entreaties were unavailing, the delegates retired, but

were immediately succeeded by Duke Ho, who entered the room with a determined air and, going up to the Ambassador, repeated the Emperor's desire to see him, adding that they would only be required to perform the English ceremony. On receiving the same answer, he caught his lordship rudely by the arm, beckoning at the same time to some surrounding Mandarins to assist him. They stepped forward, but before they reached him we started up and advanced towards him while in the act of shaking off his unmannerly assailant. This sudden movement stopped them, and they fell back with countenances full of astonishment.¹ His lordship, freed from the Duke's grasp, protested with great firmness and dignity against the insult he had received, and claimed to be treated as the representative of a great and independent sovereign, declaring that force alone should carry him into the Imperial presence. The Duke at once altered his tone, endeavouring to make it appear that what we had considered an attempt to force the Ambassador was only the Chinese mode of assisting a person unable to walk; and in the most persuasive manner entreated him to wait on the Emperor, who, he said, merely wished to see him on his arrival and would not detain him. Persuasion, however, if it could have availed at first, was now too late; and the Duke, defeated in his purpose, left the room in high displeasure."

To cut the story short, the party were at length conveyed to their intended quarters. But hardly had they breakfasted, and thrown themselves

¹ The practice of supporting great men by placing the hand under the arm is a common ceremonial proceeding; but there is a shrewd suspicion that Duke Ho was bribed by the Cantonese Co-Hong to deadlock the reception. Their pride and pocket were alike concerned, and it is possible that, if he had not resisted, Lord Amherst would have been hustled indecorously into the Imperial presence and flung on his face in a compulsory kotow. It was averred that the Canton Viceroy of the day tried that Lord Macartney, also, should be made to kotow—the object being, of course, to justify the arrogant attitude the Canton officials were wont to assume.

down to get some sleep, when they were roused by a fresh turmoil. "The Emperor, incensed at the Ambassador's refusal to visit him, had commanded our immediate departure!"

Such was the upshot of this second attempt to open negotiations with a Chinese Emperor, and the narrative will probably do more than elaborate disquisition to explain the importance attaching to the recent ceremony. Nothing could, better than Lord Amherst's experience, exhibit the overweening pride which conceived China to be the central kingdom of the universe, and the Emperor, as its sovereign, to be so immeasurably exalted that there can be no question of aught but submission to his will. The degree of respect shown to foreign representatives at Peking constitutes, in fact, a sort of political barometer, indicating the degree of progress made in overcoming these prejudices and in opening the eyes of the Chinese to their relative position among the nations of the world. The difficulty lies as much, or perhaps more, with the Mandarins than with the Emperor himself. It is believed, for instance, that Kiaking was kept in ignorance of Lord Amherst having travelled all night and being unready in point of habiliment to enter his presence; and the fact that there ensued a wholesale infliction of penalties and degradations, immediately after his departure, appears to justify the surmise. It seems, indeed, a literal truth that the officials are, in China, more Imperial than the Emperor. It was the continued exhibition, by

the provincial magnates at Canton, of this intolerable arrogance that led to the hostilities which lasted from 1839 to 1842, and were then closed by the treaty of Nanking. It was their failure to appreciate the lesson then taught which led to the Anglo-French Expeditions to the North, and the dictation at Tientsin, in 1858, of the treaty which opened China and stipulated for the residence of an English minister at Peking.

I have endeavoured, in a previous work,¹ to explain the nature of the relations that had grown up between the Celestial Empire and its neighbours during the long centuries of isolation; and how the Chinese, classing the Yang-jên, the men who came from beyond the sea, on the same level as Koreans or Annamese, resented with astonishment, probably, as well as insolence, the tone which our representatives showed a willingness to assume. Each viceroy being supposed to have charge of relations with the next neighbouring state, and the tributary envoys of that state being held bound to travel along a given route on their periodical visits to Peking, it followed naturally that the Governor-General of the Two Kwang was supposed to be charged with the affairs of England. Canton was the port to which the English chiefly traded. It was at Canton that Lord Macartney had landed in 1792, and it was from Canton that he and other envoys had set out on previous missions to Peking. All this had been

¹ "China and her Neighbours," chap. v. Chapman and Hall, 1893.

sufficient to establish a precedent in Chinese eyes. England was not bound to send tribute with the periodicity expected from Burmah or Corea, nor were English kings expected to seek investiture at the hands of the Emperor with the same regularity ; but England was inferior in its degree, and the viceroy who resided at Canton was supposed to have charge of English affairs.

It was, therefore, an act of flat insubordination when we rebelled against the insolence of the Canton Mandarins, and when the operations of Sir Hugh Gough and Admiral Parker enabled Sir Henry Pottinger to impose the treaty of Nanking. It was still more insubordinate when, rebelling again against the insolence of the Canton officials, England and France sent out the expedition which enabled Lord Elgin and Baron Gros to dictate the treaties of Tientsin. The Chinese had had no experience of foreign relations of this kind, nor of outside nations of this stamp. Still less had they had any experience of foreign representatives residing permanently at the Imperial capital, and claiming to treat on a footing of equality with the Imperial ministers. It was with a feeling, therefore, of something akin to horror that they found themselves required to accept the following clauses—the only ones, we have been told, to which they manifested serious opposition :

Art II. For the better preservation of harmony in future, Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain and His Majesty the Emperor of China mutually agree that, in accordance with the universal practice of great and friendly nations, Her Majesty the

Queen may, if she see fit, appoint ambassadors, ministers, or other diplomatic agents to the Court of Peking; and His Majesty the Emperor of China may, in like manner, if he see fit, appoint ambassadors, ministers, or other diplomatic agents to the Court of St. James.

Art. III. His Majesty the Emperor of China hereby agrees that the ambassador, minister, or other diplomatic agent so appointed by Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain may reside, with his family and establishment, permanently at the capital, or may visit it occasionally at the option of the British Government. He shall not be called upon to perform any ceremony derogatory to him as representing the sovereign of an independent nation on a footing of equality with that of China. On the other hand he shall use the same forms of ceremony and respect to His Majesty the Emperor as are employed by the ambassador, minister, or diplomatic agent of Her Majesty towards the sovereigns of independent and equal European nations.

The necessity for the further provisions that Her Majesty's representative should be free to come and go and travel, at his pleasure; that his correspondence should be inviolable, and its postage facilitated; that the expenses of the mission should be borne by the British Government, and that the Emperor should nominate one of the secretaries of state, or a president of a board, as the high officer with whom he should "transact business" on a footing of perfect equality"—will be evident if

¹ This Art. (V.) led to the formation of the Foreign Board, or Tsung-li Yamên, with which all foreign intercourse is now transacted. There had been no such department before, because there had been no foreign relations other than the intercourse with tributary states—with which the Le-pu, or Board of Ceremonies, had been wont, characteristically, to deal. It was a recognition of the importance of the new departure, that the Foreign Board was constituted of the presidents and leading members of the other boards, by which the work of government is carried on.

we bear in mind the sort of political intercourse to which China had been accustomed. Edward the Third's magnificent reception at Amiens, whither he had been summoned to do homage for Guyenne, may remind us that the custom of expensive entertainment by the suzerain once prevailed, even in Europe; and the fact that tributary envoys were graded below Chinese viceroys, at Court functions, may explain the necessity for defining the widely different conception of a national representative in the West.

CHAPTER II.

THE RIGHT OF AUDIENCE.

THE nature of the change implied by the Treaty of Tientsin will be realized exactly in proportion as we may have succeeded in picturing to ourselves the antecedent pride of the Imperial *régime*. It is only by trying to estimate the extravagance of China's pretensions that we can conceive the shock implied by the permanent residence, at Peking, of a foreign envoy who refused to admit the supremacy of the Emperor or to be treated as an inferior by the magnates of his Court. We may be better able, now, to perceive why the clauses regarding diplomatic intercourse were those to which the Chinese Plenipotentiaries manifested the keenest opposition ; and why Lord Elgin sympathizing, as his correspondence shows, with the shock to national preconceptions which they implied, consented to postpone the permanent installation of an Embassy till the Court, if not the people, had had time to familiarize themselves with the change.

But the Chinese were still a prey to the delusion, common to all Orientals, that concession meant

weakness, of which further advantage might be taken. Moved by a characteristic desire to belittle the English mission, and by a characteristic belief that it was only by accident or negligence that we had been able to reach Tientsin, twelve months before, the Government decided to close the entrance to the Peiho, and divert the Embassy to a place called Pehtang, situated on a river of the same name, a few miles further north. So that when Mr. Frederick Bruce arrived off the mouth of the Peiho, in June 1859, with the purpose of exchanging ratifications of the Treaty of Tientsin, he found the entrance closed by a boom; Admiral Hope's attempt to force a passage was repulsed; and that repulse entailed a second campaign, which resulted in the permanent establishment of our own and other Foreign Legations at Peking.

How hopelessly divergent were the Chinese and European views of the incident may be perceived from the language of an Imperial Decree issued directly after our repulse:—

“Last year (1858), the English sailed into the port of Tientsin and opened fire on our troops. We accordingly instructed Sankolinsin to adopt the most stringent measures for the defence of Taku; and the (envoys of the) different nations coming up to exchange treaties were told by Kweiliang and Hwashana, at Shanghai, that Taku was thus strictly guarded, and that they must go round by the port of Pehtang. The Englishman Bruce, notwithstanding, when he came to Tientsin [in 1859], did not abide by this understanding, but actually forced his way into the port of Taku, destroying our defensive apparatus.”

It boots not, now, to inquire how the misunder-

standing arose. Mr. Bruce denied, to begin with, having received any communication of the kind alleged. "Had it been signified to him that the Emperor had decided on closing, against foreign envoys, the natural and most convenient highway to his capital, such evidence of an unfriendly disposition would have been regarded as fit matter for remonstrance;" but "no intimation of the kind was conveyed [to him] in the letter of the Imperial Commissioners. The port of Pehtang was never named by them; nor did he enter into any engagement with them other than that contained in his letter of the 16th May, in which he acquainted his Excellency Kweiliang of the nature and object of his mission, and of his intention to proceed by ship to Tientsin, from which city he requested his Excellency to give the necessary orders for his conveyance to Peking;" neither had Admiral Hope been better enlightened, when the English squadron reached the mouth of the Peiho. What concerns us most, however, is that the Chinese Government had, by its action, forfeited all claim to the consideration which Lord Elgin had been willing to show.

"The understanding entered into between Lord Elgin and the Imperial Commissioners in October, 1858, with respect to the residence of the British Minister in China, was [Mr. Bruce wrote] at an end; and it rested henceforward exclusively with H.B. Majesty, in accordance with the terms of Art. II. of the Treaty of Tientsin, to decide whether or not she should instruct Her Minister to take up his abode permanently at Peking."

Mr. Bruce demanded therefore that the ratification of the treaty of Tientsin be exchanged with-

out delay at Peking ; that when H.B.M. Minister proceeded to Peking for that purpose he be permitted to proceed up the river, past Taku, to the city of Tientsin in a British vessel ; and that provision be made by the Chinese authorities for his conveyance, with due honour, from thence to Peking. Failing a satisfactory reply within thirty days, the British military and naval Authorities would adopt such measures as they might deem advisable for the purpose of compelling compliance.

It would be superfluous to analyze the Chinese reply, which is consistent either with the supposition that the Government had been misled, or that it was willing to mislead. We are interested chiefly in the renewed protest against ministerial residence, in reply to Mr. Bruce's intimation that Lord Elgin's concession was revoked ; and the tone of condescension in which the Emperor still speaks, as though he were dealing with a refractory child. The Chinese despatch, be it remembered, is addressed to the Grand Commissioner Ho, at Shanghai, for communication to Mr. Bruce :—

“The compromise by which, once the treaties were exchanged, the Minister was either to select some other place of residence, or to visit the Capital whenever there might be business of importance to transact, was definitely settled by the British Minister Elgin, in negotiation with the Imperial Commissioner Kweiliang and his colleagues. The revocation of this compromise is even more unreasonable” than the other proposition.

“To come to the British Minister's request to be treated with courtesy when he comes north to exchange treaties. If he be sincere in his desire of peace, let the Commissioner—when he shall have thought over all the details of the treaty, those which it will

be proper to give effect to and those respecting which compromise is to be made—negociate with the British Minister; and if, when both parties shall be perfectly agreed, he will come north without vessels of war and with a moderate retinue, and will wait at Pehtang to exchange the treaties, China will not take him to task (!) for what is gone by. But if he be resolved to bring up a number of vessels of war, and if he persist in proceeding by way of Taku, this will show that his true purpose is not the exchange of treaties, and it must be left to the High Officer in charge of the defences to take such steps as shall accord with reason.

“The despatch written on this occasion (by the British Minister) is, in much of its language, too insubordinate and extravagant (for the Council) to discuss it more than superficially. For the future he must not be so wanting in decorum.”

To this effusion Mr. Bruce briefly answered that he had been “directed by H.B.M.’s Government to demand the unqualified acceptance of certain conditions. Not only had the acceptance of these not been signified, but a letter had been written, the tone of which he regretted to observe was, throughout, such as to leave little hope of a peaceful solution of existing difficulties.” It remained, therefore, for him to refer the Imperial Government to the concluding paragraph of his last despatch, in accordance with which the naval and military authorities would now be called on to adopt such measures as might seem to them advisable for the purpose of compelling compliance and reparation.

It is curious to note how systematically the Chinese have been punished, for the resistance which their disdain impels them to oppose to demands for intercourse, by having to acquiesce, ultimately, in more extensive concessions than

were at first required. Although taking the precaution to exact the right of residence at Peking, Lord Elgin had agreed, as we have seen, that the right should not be at first exercised. If the Chinese had had the good sense to appreciate the situation, and to receive Mr. Bruce with fitting courtesy, he would have withdrawn after exchanging ratifications of the treaty, and they would have been left for a time again to their isolation. Incapable, however, like the Bourbons, of either forgetting or learning ; clinging to their traditional notions of universal superiority, and refusing to accept the lesson which had been read them at the first capture of Taku, they brought upon themselves deeper humiliation and a permanent infliction. The "defensive apparatus" at the mouth of the Peiho was overthrown ; Tientsin was again occupied ; a gate of Peking had to be surrendered. And Art. II. of the convention dictated by Lord Elgin in the capital, after the second brief campaign, expressly declared that the British Representative would henceforward reside permanently or occasionally at Peking, as Her Majesty should be pleased to decide.

As it is better, occasionally, to undergo the brief agony of cauterizing a wound, so it was better, perhaps, that this question should be completely solved. The attempt to bar the entrance to the Peiho was dictated, no doubt, by military precautions as well as by a willingness to put a slight upon the barbarian intruder : the Chinese did not want foreign

warships intruding on the water-way to the capital. But they were abundantly willing, also, to reduce the significance of the mission by diverting it to Pehtang. Sooner or later that spirit would have broken out, even if Mr. Bruce had been received at Tientsin; and the lesson which was promptly evoked would have had to be taught later on. Otherwise, so great had been the objection shown to the permanent residence of foreign envoys, and so well-disposed had foreigners been to humour the prejudice, that Baron Gros had not gone beyond requiring that French representatives should have the right of visiting the capital "when important affairs called them"; merely stipulating for the right of residence in case any other treaty power obtained it. The treaty concluded by the United States, about the same time, asserted the right "to visit and sojourn at the capital," and confer on matters of common interest; but provided that the visits of the American representative should "not exceed one in each year, and that he should complete his business without unnecessary delay."

Russia had other arrangements, and was believed to have little sympathy with the purpose of the western powers to open permanent relations with the Imperial Cabinet. Russian intercourse with Peking had not, perhaps, been intimate; but such as it was she had had it practically to herself; for the rare visits of Papal and Portuguese emissaries, and even of Dutch and English envoys, had no permanent consequence or importance.

During the early wars between Russia and China, on the Amoor, the Chinese took many Russian prisoners; others had deserted to them; and all were sent to Peking and formed into a special company of the Imperial Guard. They were permitted to build a church, and to decorate it with pictures which had been brought from Komarsk and Albazin.¹ The treaty of Nerchinsk opened, in 1689, the way for occasional missions; and a Russian envoy named Ides obtained permission, in 1692, to send a priest to administer to the spiritual wants of his countrymen. The caravans which came to trade at Peking, under the terms of the new peace, were lodged in a building called the Russia house; and the Chinese were persuaded, in 1727, to build another church, attached to it, and to admit three more priests. Six Russians were at the same time admitted to reside at Peking, for the purpose of learning Chinese and Manchu, and teaching Russian to some Chinese. The term of residence originally fixed for members of this mission was ten years, but it was afterwards reduced to six. The personnel at the time of the Anglo-French invasion comprised an archimandrite, three priests, four students, a physician, and an artist. It was therefore, in character as well as origin, exclusively ecclesiastical. But it may be noted, as an instance of discretion, that the members never engaged in missionary enterprise. Confining themselves to work of a

¹ V. The Russians on the Amoor. Ravenstein, Trübner, 1860.

scientific and political nature, they were left in peace during all the turmoil of persecution to which others had been subjected; and must have answered, as Mr. Ravenstein suggests, in many respects, the purpose of a regular embassy.

Content, however, as she may have been with these informal relations, Russia could not, obviously, lag behind her rivals; and so Art. II. of a treaty negotiated at Peking by Count Poutiatine, in 1858, stipulated that

"Henceforth communication between the supreme government of Russia and the supreme government of China shall no longer be carried on, as at present, by the senate on the one hand and the *Li-fan-yuen*¹ on the other; but the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs shall communicate with the senior member of the Council of State or the Prime Minister at Peking. They shall treat on a footing of perfect equality.

"Ordinary correspondence between them shall be transmitted by the frontier authorities. Communications of special importance, however, shall be carried on by an employé designated for the purpose, who may enter into verbal explanations with the members of the Council of State and the First Minister. He will deliver his despatches through the medium of the President of the Board of Rites.

"If the Russian Government deem it necessary to name a Minister plenipotentiary to reside at one of the open ports of China, he will treat, in his personal relations, and in his correspondence with the local authorities and the Ministers at Peking, according to the general rules now agreed upon by all foreign states.

"Russian envoys may go to Peking either by way of Kiakta and Oorga, or by Taku at the mouth of the Peiho, or any other open town or port, etc., etc."

¹ Correspondence on Russian affairs passed between the Senate of Tobolsk and the Chinese *Li-fan-yuen*, a sort of Colonial Office; the ecclesiastical establishment aforesaid doing all interpreter work required.

Another article secured all political or commercial privileges that other countries might acquire, by a so-called "favoured nation" clause; and Russia has, as a matter of fact, since had a minister at Peking on the same footing as other nations.

But though the Emperor might have been constrained to admit the right of residence, nothing had been said about the right of audience; and the innovation of foreign envoys taking up permanent residence at Peking was far less than the admission that any living being could appear before the Emperor otherwise than on bended knees. It was an axiom of State etiquette that the Envoys of the tributary nations with whom Chinese diplomacy had been so far concerned, were not even on a par with the Ministers of the Empire. When the reigning king of Annam came, in 1790, to present congratulations on Kienlung's birthday, he was assigned a place immediately below the princes of the first order, and performed obeisance along with the rest. Lord Macartney had, it was true, been allowed to present his credentials without the kotow, but other foreign envoys seem to have complied with the full requirements of Chinese etiquette. A record of the fifty-ninth year of Kang-hi (A.D. 1720) and another of the third year of Yung-cheng (1725) expressly affirm that Western Envoys (the first presumed to be a Papal legate, the latter evidently Alexander Metello) presented their letters

with the full ceremony of the kotow. "A President of the Board of Ceremonies and an officer of the Court of State Ceremonial introduced the envoy, who, respectfully holding up the letter, advanced and laid it on the table, then retired and knelt and kotowed nine times. He then advanced again, took up the letter, ascended the left steps, entered the pavilion by the left door, and, proceeding on his knees as far as the throne, respectfully presented it to the Emperor, who received it and passed it on to one of his ministers. The envoy rose up, retired by the left steps, and again knelt and kotowed nine times."¹ It was a considerable honour that he was again admitted, after this, and invited to drink tea in the Imperial presence; for when an envoy from Siam requested, nine years later, to be allowed a similar privilege, it was decided that Corea alone among the tributary states was on a sufficiently near footing to entitle her envoy to such an honour! So that, if the Chinese did distinguish in a measure between European and Asiatic tributaries, a long interval had to be bridged to reach a reception on terms consistent with our ideas. The equality of European nations and of European sovereigns with China and her Ruler might have been affirmed in the treaties; but it remained to translate that avowal into practice by asserting and obtaining the right of audience on the footing alleged.

¹ "The Tributary Nations of China." *China Review*, September and October, 1883.

Circumstances combined to delay this consummation for nearly half a generation. The Emperor Hienfung fled to Zehol, on the advance of the allied armies to Peking, and died there without revisiting his capital. His son and successor was a child; so Chinese statesmen obtained a long grace, during which they might accustom themselves to the accomplished fact and prepare for further innovation. Availing themselves of the opening effected by England and France, other great powers had negotiated treaties on a similar footing in the interval; and so, when Tungchih came of age, the Ministers of Germany, Holland, Russia, and the United States associated themselves with the representatives of England and France in proposing to offer their congratulations and deliver their credentials to him upon the occasion.

Even the campaigns of 1858-60 had scarcely lowered the tone of the great majority of the literati. The invader had come, and had gone, as had happened before in Chinese history; but the Empire remained; and the barbarian was a barbarian still. Political education had made so much progress, however, among the chief statesmen of Peking, that it was known refusal would be foolish, and that the kotow was out of the question. Tungchih assumed the reigns of power in February, 1873; and the publication of the following edict in the *Peking Gazette* of June 15th announced that the plunge would be taken:—

“The Tsungli Yamên [Foreign Office] having presented a memorial to the effect that the Foreign Ministers residing in Peking have implored [us to grant] an audience, that they may deliver letters from their Governments, we command that the Foreign Ministers residing in Peking who have brought letters from their Governments be accorded audience. Respect this!”

It was not till ten days later that a memorandum of etiquette was agreed upon. The question had been so often debated that it might have been supposed every detail would have been foreseen and pre-arranged; but prevision is not a strong point in the Chinese character. There was haggling, to the last, about form and ceremony; the Mandarins trying, of course, to minimize the concession, and the Ministers striving to assert the dignity of their respective States. The audience was at last fixed for the 29th, and I avail myself of the British Minister's despatch¹ to Lord Granville for a description of the incident.

The place appointed was the Tsu-Kwang-Ko, or purple pavilion, a large building in the grounds west of the palace; and it had been settled that the Ministers should rendezvous at a building known as the Pei-t'ang, a Roman Catholic cathedral and mission-house, which stood not far from the spot. I take up Sir Thomas Wade's narrative at this point:—

“We rendezvoused accordingly at the Pei-t'ang, and were thence escorted by a Minister of the Yamên to the north gate of

¹ China. No. 1 (1874). Correspondence respecting the audience granted, etc., at Peking by the Emperor of China.

the palace grounds in our chairs: the thoroughfare across the marble bridge, which spans the piece of water above mentioned, being closed to the public eastward by desire of the Emperor. We had come to the Pei-t'ang through the west of the outer city, large numbers of people being already on the alert to see the foreigners who were to be presented to the Emperor without prostrating themselves. A dense crowd was assembled in the vicinity of the Pei-t'ang for the same purpose. At the Fu-Hua-Mên, the gate by which the Palace grounds are here entered from the north, we left our chairs, and were received by the Grand Secretary [Wên-siang] and all other Ministers of the Yamên, the Prince [Kung] and the Ministers Pao and Shên excepted. We had been told that they would be in attendance all the morning on his Majesty. We proceeded, according to the programme, to the Shih-ying-Kung, or Palace of Seasonableness, a temple in which, as circumstances require, the Emperor prays for rain or for cessation of rain. Confectionery, tea, and Chinese wine from the Emperor's buttery were offered us, and after waiting above an hour, we moved on with the Ministers to a large tent pitched westward of the purple pavilion.

"The Emperor did not arrive at the pavilion as soon as we had been led to expect. The reason assigned was the receipt of important despatches from the seat of war in the north-west. The Prince of Kung and the two Ministers with him were already waiting outside the tent to explain the delay, and returned again and again, as it were apologetically, to keep us company with the rest. The grounds were thronged with officials; but except a few men wearing Chinese sabres of antique form, I saw nothing like a soldier in our immediate vicinity. At length, after we had waited in the tent at least an hour and a half, the Japanese Ambassador was summoned to the presence, and, his audience ended, came our turn.¹

¹ The representative of Germany had, in the meantime, left Peking; but an Ambassador from Japan had arrived, and claimed to be received on the same footing as his colleagues. It was arranged, indeed, that he should have his audience first, partly on account of his rank as Ambassador, partly because the letter with which he was charged was one of congratulation. The five Ministers holding letters of credence succeeded.

"In front of the pavilion in which we were received is a great platform of stone, accessible on three sides by flights of steps. We ascended, as it had been agreed, after some debate, we should, by the steps on the western side, and, entering the pavilion, found ourselves at once in a large hall, divided by wooden pillars in the usual northern style, into five sections. We came into this by the second section from the west, filing into the centre section until we were opposite the throne on which the Emperor was seated at the north end of the hall. We then bowed to the Emperor, advanced a few paces and bowed again, then advanced a few paces farther, bowing again, and halted before a long yellow table about half-way up the hall, I should say some ten or twelve paces distant from the throne.

"The throne was, I think, raised above the floor of the dais on which it stood, by a couple of steps. The dais itself was separated from the hall by a light rail, broken right and left of the throne by low flights of three stairs each. The Emperor was seated Manchu fashion, that is, cross-legged. Upon his left were the Prince of Kung, his brother, known as the seventh Prince, and another Prince, the son of the famous Sankolinsin, who repulsed our attack on the forts of Taku in 1859. To the right of his Majesty stood two other magnates, the nearest being the senior of the hereditary princes not of the Imperial house; the other, I believe, a son-in-law of the old Emperor . . . Tao-Kuang. Below on either side was a double rank of high officials, which spread outwards from the throne towards us until their flanks reached the columns marking the outer line of the centre section in which we were standing. In rear of these were others filling the flank sections east and west up to the walls. On the whole the spectacle was fair to see, although I should not go so far as to style it imposing.

"Our party having halted as I have described, the Minister of Russia, General Vlangaly, as Doyen of the Corps, read aloud an address in French. A Chinese translation of this was then read by M. Bismarck, Secrétaire Interprète of the German Legation, who had been selected to act as Interpreter-General at our conferences. As soon as the address was delivered we laid our letters of credence upon the table. The Emperor made a slight bow of acknowledgment, and the Prince of Kung falling upon both knees at the foot of the throne, his Majesty appeared to

· speak to him—I say appeared, because no sound reached my ears. We had been told, however, that the Emperor would speak in Manchu, and that the Prince would interpret. Accordingly, as soon as his Highness rose, he descended the steps, and informed us that his Majesty declared that the letters of credence had been received. Then, returning to his place, he again fell upon his knees, and the Emperor having again spoken to him in a low tone, he again descended the steps and, coming up to us, informed us that his Majesty trusted that our respective Rulers were in good health, and expressed a hope that foreign affairs might all be satisfactorily arranged between foreign Ministers and the Tsung-li Yamèn. This closed the audience, which may have lasted more than five minutes.

“We then all withdrew in the usual fashion, ‘à reculons’ and bowing; with the exception of M. de Geofroy, Minister of France, who had a reply to deliver from his Government to the letter of explanations carried to France in 1870 by the Minister Chunghow. . . . It had been conceded, not without debate, that M. de Geofroy was for this second audience to be allowed the use of his own interpreter, M. Deveria. As we retired, therefore, that gentleman was introduced. The second audience was over as quickly as the first, and M. de Geofroy presently overtook us at the Shih-ying-K’ung, whence, after a short session, we were conducted to our chairs by the Ministers of the Yamèn, the Grand Secretary joining the rest at the gate.”

So ended a ceremony which had been the subject of much anticipation, and which was subjected at the time to keen criticism. There were objections to the language of the edict, not the least of which was that the envoys (designated by the same term as the annual emissaries from Corea) had *supplicated* permission to present letters. Exception was taken also to the locality, which was a pavilion in the Palace grounds where audience was commonly given to envoys from Mongolia, Thibet, and other feudatory states. Still, while

we may chafe at the remains of pretension displayed, we must remember that it was, in Chinese eyes, a remarkable concession for the Emperor to give audience at all to a number of foreigners declining not only to kotow but even to bend the knee. We must remember, to quote again the language of Sir Thomas Wade's despatch, "the long-standing pretension of the Emperor of China to this act of homage, and the tradition of isolated supremacy on which that pretension had been based. The Empire had, for the first time in its history, broken with that tradition; not perhaps with a good grace, but still broken with it past recall."

Much might be forgiven, from this point of view, to a people among whom ceremony is a religion, and where the Board of Rites has traditionally had charge of relations with neighbouring states. More might have been forgiven, but for the evident endeavour to minimize and misrepresent the concession actually made. The Mandarins who were present at the audience knew, of course, that the foreigners had been too unruly to show proper respect, and that the Son of Heaven had condoned their presumption; but it was not a question only of Peking, or of the Tsung-li Yamên, or of the Imperial Cabinet. Conservative as these might be, some measure of knowledge had been forced upon them. What was important was to enlighten the great official and literary mass which constitutes, so to speak, the mind of China, and which could be reached only through

the official Gazette. So far, however, from this obligation being faced, there had been an evident willingness to convey, by the form of announcement, an impression that the reception was on all fours with the proceedings customary in the case of tributary states.

Nor was this all. Not only were no proper means taken to give publicity to the circumstances, or to establish clearly in the eyes of the provinces the real position of European nations ; but the Court, or the Court *entourage*, was accused of circulating, semi-officially, a gross caricature of the proceedings. Besides the *Peking Gazette* itself, which is a compilation of strictly official documents—imperial edicts, memorials from the provincial officials, &c.—supplements containing matter of especial interest in particular provinces are printed and circulated, with it, to the officials of the districts concerned. And the opportunity was said to have been taken to circulate, in that way, the following piece of persiflage :—

“ At Peking, since his Majesty's assumption of power, rain and sunshine have succeeded each other in due season, and the public mind has been tranquilly at rest. As regards the audience of the foreign envoys, what they wanted at first was to be carried in sedan chairs within the great gate of the Palace, and to enter the reception hall wearing their swords. They demanded that the Emperor should descend from his throne, and with his own hands receive their letters of credence ; but upon this the Grand Secretary Wen-siang, smashing his tea-cup into fragments, sternly opposed the idea ; and thus it came to be agreed that the audience should take place at the Tsu-kwang-ko on the sixth day of the sixth

moon. The ceremonies were rehearsed on the preceding day, at the Tsung-li Yamên. This was done in an informal way amid chatting and laughter, and no particular attention was paid to the matter. On the day itself the entire brigade of Guards was on duty at the West Park Gate, in bright array and with drawn swords. The French, American, British, Russian, Prussian, and Austrian representatives—in all twelve persons from six different countries—were permitted to wear their swords, and were introduced, by the heads of departments from the Tsung-li Yamên, within the gateway of the park. As they passed each entrance in succession, the gate was locked. On reaching the foot of the daïs, the high functionaries of the Tsung-li Yamên led them up the steps. His Majesty having ascended the throne, the envoys were led to the space at its foot, where they performed the ceremony of inclining the body. They did not kneel. By the side of the steps there was placed a yellow table, and the envoys stood in rank to read out their credentials, the British having the leading place. When he had read a few sentences he began to tremble from head to foot, and was incapable of completing the perusal. The Emperor asked, 'Is the Prince of your country well?' but he could utter no reply. The Emperor again asked, 'You have besought permission to see me time and time again—what is it you have to say to me?' But again he was unable to make answer. The next proceeding was to hand in the credentials, but in doing this he fell down on the ground time after time, and not a syllable could he articulate. Upon this Prince Kung laughed loud at him before the entire Court, exclaiming, 'Chicken feather!' and gave orders to have him assisted down the steps. He was unable to move of his own accord, and sat down on the floor perspiring and panting for breath. The whole twelve shook their heads and whispered together, no one knows what. When the time came for the assembly at the banquet they still remained incapable, and dispersed in hurried confusion. Prince Kung said to them, 'You would not believe that it is no light matter to come face to face with his Majesty; but what have you got to say about it to-day? This is what we Chinese call "chicken feather," and it will be a joke for the whole Empire.' At the time (of presentation) the throne was not more than a few paces off, and yet, as (the envoys) themselves declare, they did not get sight of the celestial visage. Everybody says there

must have been some divine apparition before their eyes, to cause them to tremble and be afraid as it turned out."

That such a document did circulate, there was no doubt whatever; but no one might have paid much attention to it save for its alleged origin: and if the charge of connivance appear extravagant, the fact that a high official named Wojen had expressed, not long before, a wish to flay foreigners and make saddles of their skins, may render it less incredible. The document was brought to the notice of the Tsung-li Yamên, who of course disavowed it. But the matter was deemed serious enough to call for rectification; and a counter-memorandum, explaining what did take place, was drawn up at one of the Legations, by general consent, and circulated in Peking and the Provinces as a corrective. It may be inferred from these incidents how great was the opposition Foreign Ministers had to encounter in procuring a reception at all consistent with European ideas, and how stupendous in Chinese eyes was the innovation implied.

Other audiences were granted to other Ministers, upon occasion, during the ensuing year; but another minority then intervened, to break off once more the thread of personal relations. Eighteen months later, in January, 1875, the Emperor Tung-chih "sped upwards on the dragon to be a guest on high;" and, after an intrigue with which we are not here concerned, the present Emperor, then a child of four, was nominated in his stead. The Regency fell back into the hands of the Dowager

Empresses, and fourteen years had to elapse before the formal accession of the reigning monarch could bring the question again to the fore.

Much was happening, however, in the meantime, to break down the barriers of ignorance and conceit. Mr. Burlingame's roving mission contributed more, perhaps, to soften the tone of Western diplomacy towards China than to enlighten the Chinese; but it did enlighten its members, and enlighten even the Imperial Government, in some degree; for it showed the Chinese attachés that Western power and civilization were facts, and they imparted so much of the lesson as they dared, on their return. The massacre of French missionaries and other foreigners, at Tientsin, in 1870, had entailed the despatch of a high Chinese official, Chungchow, on a mission of apology to Paris; and one of the conditions of reparation exacted by Sir Thomas Wade for the murder of our own countryman, Margary, five years later, in Yunnan, was a fresh mission of apology, which the Imperial Government resolved, this time, to convert into a permanent Legation at St. James'. The desirability of having representatives abroad had occurred to certain Chinese statesmen so long ago as 1861; but all the precepts in favour of hastening slowly which the wit of various nations has evolved, find expression and effect in clogging the wheels of the Chinese chariot of State. It was only under stress of the events of 1876, that they came at last to a decision.

Chinese Ministers have, since, been accredited to the chief capitals of Europe and to Washington ; and there has been a *va-et-vient* of envoys and *attachés*, of servants and underlings, who cannot but have contributed to enlighten their countrymen, in some small degree, as to the actual facts about Western lands. Interest was, therefore, naturally felt as to the attitude which the young Emperor Kwangsu had been taught to assume ; and his first reception may perhaps be taken as a fair indication of progress made. He came of age in 1889, and intimation was soon after made that the foreign representatives would be pleased to offer him their congratulations on the event. The matter was not pressed, and the Ministers themselves are said to have been somewhat taken by surprise by the decision expressed in the following edict, which appeared in the *Peking Gazette* on the 12th of December, 1890 :—

“ Since the Treaties have been made with the various nations, letters and despatches under the seals of the Governments have passed to and fro, making complimentary inquiries year by year without intermission. The harmony that has existed has become thus from time to time more and more secure. The Ministers of the various Powers residing in Peking have abundantly shown their loyal desire to maintain peaceful relations and international friendship. This I cordially recognize, and I rejoice in it.

“ In the first and second months of last year (February, 1888), when there were special reasons for expressing national joy, I received a Gracious Decree (from the Empress Dowager) ordering the Ministers of the Yamèn for Foreign Affairs to entertain the Ministers of the foreign nations at a banquet. That occasion was a memorable and happy one. I have now been in charge of the Government for two years. The Ministers of foreign Powers

ought to be received by me at an audience, and I hereby decree that the audience to be held be in accordance with that of the 12th year of the reign of Tungchih (1873). It is also hereby decreed that a day be fixed every year for an audience, in order to show my desire to treat with honour all the Ministers of the foreign Powers resident in Peking, whether fully empowered, or temporarily in charge of the affairs of their Governments. The Ministers of the Yamên for Foreign Affairs are hereby ordered to prepare in the first month of the ensuing New Year a memorial asking that a time for the audience may be fixed. On the next day the Foreign Ministers are to be received at a banquet at the Foreign Office. The same is to be done every year in the first month, and the rule will be the same on each occasion. New Ministers coming will be received at this annual audience. At all times of national congratulation, when China and the foreign countries give suitable expression to their joy, the Ministers of the Foreign Office are also to offer a memorial asking for the bestowal of a banquet, to show the sincere and increasing desire of the Imperial Government for the maintenance of peace and the best possible relations between China and the Foreign States. In regard to the details, the Yamên is hereby ordered to memorialize for instructions on each occasion."

Here was, at least, an improvement upon the curt edict of the Emperor Tungchih. Instead of grudging assent, here was a willing proffer; and the conditions of foreign intercourse were recognized with frankness and cordiality. If there was still a flavour of condescension, something might be allowed for the peculiarities of Chinese idiom. But the actual reception left much still to be desired.

In the first place, the time had come for differentiating these audiences, in the eyes of all China, from the reception of tributary envoys; whereas the bald announcement made in the *Peking*

Gazette, of March 4, 1891, that "at half-past eleven on the morrow the Emperor would receive all the nations in audience, at the Tsu-Kwang-Ko," would hardly distinguish the ceremony from a similar reception accorded in the same building, a few days later, to a number of Mongolian and Thibetan emissaries. Nor would the notice published subsequently, that "at noon on the 5th, the Emperor [had] received in audience the Ministers of the various nations—Brandt, Denby, Walsham," &c., &c., do much to better the impression. There is said, also, to have been unseemly crowding by the on-lookers assembled near the pavilion, who would not have been permitted to press around and touch great Chinese Mandarins as they seem to have pressed around the Ministers and their suites.

The several Ministers were admitted in succession, instead of in a batch as in 1873; and the Secretaries and principal Attachés of the Legations had a collective interview, after the audience-in-chief had been dispatched. The Emperor sat, as on the former occasion, on a raised platform at the end of the principal hall; Prince Ching, the President of the Foreign Board, kneeling by his side. Each Minister, on entering, advanced to within about six feet of this platform, making on the way three obeisances. Prince Ching then introduced him by name, and he read a congratulatory address, which was repeated in Chinese by his interpreter. Advancing then to the foot of the

platform, he was met by Prince Ching, who took¹ the letters of credence and laid them on a table immediately in front of the Emperor. The latter bowed an acknowledgment, and addressed to Prince Ching—who listened kneeling and, descending the steps with his arms raised, in accordance with Confucian tradition, repeated to the foreign interpreter for translation—a reply which, if it meant little, was certainly unexceptionable in point of courtesy and cordiality.

“We desire [it ran] to convey to all the Ministers, *Chargés d’Affaires*, and Secretaries who have presented congratulations to Us, that We truly appreciate, and are very pleased with all your kind expressions, and We sincerely wish that your respective sovereigns may this year have all things according to their hearts’ desires, and that their happiness and prosperity may daily increase. We also hope that you Ministers will stay long in China in the full enjoyment of health, and that friendly relations between China and foreign countries will never cease.”

The Emperor was said to be pleased with the audience, and the Chinese Ministers in attendance expressed themselves gratified with its success. But foreign residents in the East were less satisfied. There was progress, no doubt. Tungchih’s audience was the first step in retreat from a false position; and Kwangsu’s was an improvement upon Tungchih’s; but it was felt that con-

¹ This was a step backwards. By dint of insistence, the Ministers had succeeded, in 1873, in exacting that they should place their letters on the table themselves, instead of handing them to an intermediary; and Sir George Staunton affirms, as we have seen, that Lord Macartney placed his in the hands of Kienlung! Such trifles may illustrate the punctiliousness and the encroaching tendency of Chinese officials.

sideration enough had been shown to Chinese prejudices and tradition. There might have been something to say in favour of compromise on the first occasion; but to persist in using the Tsu Kwang-Ko was to persist in an assumption that could no longer be endured. The Ministers had, it was well known, demanded to be received in the Palace. If the Chinese had declared an audience in the Palace to be impossible without the kotow, an audience in the Tsu-Kwang-Ko must clearly be an inferior function; and anything in the shape of an inferior reception implied an affectation of Imperial superiority that lowered foreigners, generally, in the eyes of the Chinese. Nor could it but accentuate that impression, that European monarchs should be according Chinese envoys full and equal privileges while their own representatives were grudging similar recognition. It might have been right and reasonable not to shake the Imperial prestige, too rudely, in the beginning; but there had been time, now, for the truth to become known, and it was time that it should be frankly acknowledged.

A similar conviction seems to have come home, at length, to Peking. The Foreign Ministers had, it came to be understood, clearly intimated that they would go no more to the Tsu-Kwang-Ko; and it was borne in upon the Chinese that a complete solution could not be far off. The New Year reception was suspended, next year, in face of this decision; but one further compromise was

admitted. The Austrian Minister was received, in October, in a building called the Cheng-kwang-tien, which was free from the tributary taint as it had not been used for the purpose of audience, at all, for a hundred years. The new British Minister, Mr. O'Connor, presented his credentials in the same Hall, in January, 1893, and the German Minister followed the example in July. But the Ministers of France and Russia held aloof; and French newspapers, both in Paris and Saigon, complained bitterly of the want of solidarity implied in what they stigmatized as an interested concession.

The criticism would have been more pertinent if the new departure had proved to be a new advice for prolonging an untenable position. But the goal was at hand. Under circumstances not untinged with sadness for the young sovereign, whose throne was being shaken from without while he was breaking with its traditions within, the Foreign Ministers were received in the Palace, on the 12th November last; and the incident is briefly recorded, in the *Peking Gazette*, in the following terms :—

On Monday last, the Emperor gave audience in the Wen-hua-tien to the following Ministers: American, Russian, English, French, Belgian, Swedish, and the Acting Minister for Spain.¹

¹ Locality apart, the precedent of former audiences seems to have been followed, and the reception itself to have gone off well. The Emperor was seated behind a table on a raised dais, before a lacquered screen. He is described as looking intelligent, but delicate and sad.

There are not wanting critics to suggest that it was the rattle of the stick in the Japanese hat which finally startled the Court out of its propriety; and that it would have been better for China and ourselves if we had forced on the solution a generation ago. Human motives are generally complex, and it is not impossible that the disillusionment of the war may have hastened the official perceptions. A lively sense of favours to come influences people in the East as well as in the West; and Chinese statesmen are anxious, without doubt, to enlist European sympathy in their present trouble. Still there are progressive forces even in Peking; and it is not unlikely that something may be due to the Emperor himself, who is credited with intelligence and perception though he be handicapped by education and restraint. Persons have been known, even in Western Courts, to be *plus royalistes que le roi*; and Kienlung's example may persuade us that the Emperor can be less prejudiced than his Mandarins. The momentous question is whether the surrender may herald further progress, or whether the hide-bound statecraft of China will prove impervious, still, to the reforms needed to save the Empire from disaster. Few will venture to give an answer unqualified by provisos and limitations. Slow in movement as in thought, China has been slow to adopt industrial innovations as she has been slow to admit the facts of modern political life. But the review which has been attempted may enable us to per-

ceive that she does move. We have noted the ceremonial in force at a time when the Emperor's universal supremacy was a dogma of political faith ; we have seen Kienlung so far relaxing as to permit Lord Macartney to bend one knee; while the courtiers of Kiaking outrage hospitality and drive Lord Amherst contumeliously away. We have noted the blows by which these pretensions were shattered. We have been present with Sir Thomas Wade at the first audience under the new *régime*, when prostration and genuflexion were omitted, but when the Imperial edict was curt, and when an affectation of concession was still obtruded. We have seen the foreign representatives invited, and politely received—not only they, but their full staff—in 1891; and we have seen the coping stone put to the edifice by a reception in the Palace in 1894. A survey of these successive stages may help us to realize the magnitude of the change in Chinese conceptions since the Emperor ranked as the Solitary Man, and all the Princes of the world as his tributaries and inferiors.

CHAPTER III.

EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM.

IF we have succeeded in gaining an insight into the origin and character of Chinese political pretensions, it may be worth examining the educational system under which those pretensions became crystallized. China has been characterized as a country of contradictions. Visitors are struck by the contradictions in habit; inquirers are struck by contradictions in thought. The needle of the Chinese compass points south, and a boatman will tell you his course lies west-north. White is mourning, and philosophers place the seat of understanding in the belly. Chinese books begin where ours end, and read from right to left. Instead of writing the name first, and place last, in addressing a letter, the Chinese do exactly the reverse; and it may not be amiss, before we smile, to ask whether that is not consistent with the order of the information which the postal authorities require. No one that I am aware of has tried to explain why the tone of thought should have been reversed in travelling east, nor is the inquiry material to our purpose.

The point is that the Chinese have developed, in their isolation, a literature, a civilization, and a system of polity of their own; a civilization, moreover, so unquestionably superior that it imposed itself upon the neighbouring nations and made them willing satellites of the empire.

I have before me a Chinese map, which represents China as, literally, a "Central Kingdom," with a constellation of small states around to represent the rest of the world. It is an expression of ignorance, but of an ignorance not unnaturally fostered during millennia of isolation. Visitors might come occasionally out of the Far West; but they returned, like comets, into the space out of which they had come. The Chinese world consisted, for practical purposes, of the Central Kingdom and the adjacent countries which admitted her superiority. Monarchs are apt to become vain under such conditions; they get accustomed to being called King-of-Kings: and National vanity is not unknown even in the West, though its fallacy may be proved, occasionally, by military demonstration. But war, travel, attrition of ideas—some cause, or some variety of causes, have saved Europe from crystallization. There may have been a tendency that way in the supreme virtue once ascribed to a classical education; but circumstances operated as a check. It never occurred to us, at any rate, to hand over the government of the country to scholiasts as of right, or to admit as a maxim that senior wranglers were necessarily capable of acting equally as pro-consuls, prime ministers, generals, or

commanders of the Channel fleet. The conception would have seemed, rather, antagonistic to common sense ; but we must remember that China is a country of contradictions ; and it is precisely owing to the ascendancy of these conceptions that its education has been crystallized, its progress hindered, if not arrested—and that its generals are beaten, in every encounter, by a race which has perceived that knowledge at any rate, if not wisdom, has increased since the days of Solomon, and that military tactics which were good before the crusades are inefficient against rifles and Gatling guns. We might have been in similar danger, ourselves, if the practice of making High Church dignitaries prime ministers had not been kept in check by a distinct impression, on the part of turbulent barons, that arms were in their way as good as gowns. Gowns have gained the upper hand in China, altogether ; and the result may perhaps be taken to show that not even do competitive examinations express the highest form of selection.

Yet, if there is one feature in Chinese polity that has been admired in Europe, with unqualified approval, it is the public examinations through which every Chinese must pass if he would enter official life or would obtain a degree giving him the cachet of an educated gentleman. Nor can anything seem more excellent, in theory, than a system which sends the elect of districts to compete in the capital of the Province, and the elect of provinces to compete in the capital of the Empire, for the literary honours

which promise them a career, and which assure to the State a choice of educated servants. The sentiment on which this competitive system is founded is that only "the wise and able should rule," and it would seem difficult to devise a better method of bringing the wise and able to the fore.

"The first effect of the system," writes one¹ who was a deep student of Chinese civilization, "is the establishment of schools in every village, town, and city—two, three, or twenty, in proportion to the population. The next effect is the drafting of the brighter boys to the list of candidates for degrees. The third effect is the sifting of these candidates; and the test is threefold; not merely scholarship, but excellence in letters combined with good moral character and good blood: for every aspirant requires to show a pedigree unsoiled through three generations, and also that his forbears do not belong to any of the tabooed classes, such as play-actors, barbers, and executioners." These precautions apart, the examinations fulfil the great boast of democracy, by providing an opening for talent in every grade of society, and have acted as a stimulus to education during at least thirteen centuries.

Supposing everything as regards the genealogical tree and the personal reputation of the candidates is satisfactory, "they begin their student's course by going up twice every three

¹ "The Literati of China, and How to Meet them." By the Rev. A. Williamson, LL.D.

years to be examined in the chief city of their district, also twice in three years to the chief city of their department." These examinations are, however, merely initiatory, and confer no degree. The real trial of strength begins when the official examiner for the entire province visits the prefectural city. The number which assembles at these examinations differs largely in different provinces, ranging from 3000 up to 12,000. The proportion of places or degrees obtainable likewise varies from, say, 1 in 40 or 50 to 1 in 80 or 100.

"Those who gain this degree (called *Siu-tsai*, or 'Budding Talent'), assemble again once every three years at the capital of the province, to compete for the second or *Kiu-jen* degree (equal to our M.A.). Here the chances are still fewer. About 8000 or 10,000 present themselves, but only 64 (in *Shantung*, *e.g.*) can 'leap the dragon gate,' as it is called, and enter the arena for future competition. . . . These *Kiu-jen* examinations are held simultaneously at the capital of each province; and the proud victors proceed to Peking in the following spring, to contend for the third degree, called the *Tsin-shi* (= L.L.D.), which means 'fit for office.' In this third intellectual tournament the competitor enters the list with similarly picked men from all the provinces of China. The number varies from 8000 to 10,000, and there are from 200 to 400 places. . . . The prize-men in this contest again assemble for a final bout before the Emperor himself, who eliminates eighteen or so [called *Hanlin*], and from these selects . . . first, second, and third wranglers. . . . These are feasted by the Emperor, their names are carried by expresses throughout the whole country, and for the time being they are the heroes of the empire. And they deserve to be so; for observe, they are not the wranglers of one university only, but of the whole nation, and not a small nation, but one equal to Europe, and not annuals, but the choicest outcome of three years; so that they stand as if they were victors in a contest in which all the high-degree men and prize-men in every nation in Europe assembled triennially to compete for supremacy."

Surely, concludes Dr. Williamson, those who could carry off the laurels in such a contest must be of high intellectual power and of rare attainments. And so, in fact, they are; but, as is too often the case in China, the practical effect of the system is less perfect than the theoretical conception—for this reason: the standard of excellence is acquaintance with the classical writers of antiquity! and it is this perpetual striving after an antique instead of a progressive standard that has helped to petrify Chinese civilization. The amount of study required is immense, but the range of subjects through which the candidates have to pass is immeasurably inferior to those set before a Western scholar. It is some oracular and often recondite saying of Confucius which is usually given as a theme; and the familiarity shown by a candidate with the lore of the ancients will go farther than modern knowledge, or originality in his own reflections, to commend his essay to the Examiners. It is needless to emphasize the stereotyping effect of this system on the national mind. By ever striving after a fixed and antique model, every generation came to resemble its predecessor. A high standard of culture was reached, but it was culture of an unique kind, in which the inventive faculties lay comparatively dormant while the mnemonic were abnormally developed; where archaic was preferred to progressive thought, and literary style became a principal instead of an incidental test of merit.

The conservatism of the Chinese has been a subject of remark, wonder, and some contempt among

Western nations ; but it has perhaps been less generally understood that it is to these examinations the fixity is greatly due. English people themselves are more exclusive than they suspect ; more prone to reject fresh ideas and ridicule strange notions, for the simple reason that they *are* strange—different, that is, from the habits of thought and conduct in which they have been educated. But English students are at least expected to be “up” in the latest scientific discovery, almost in the latest philosophical conceit ; whereas the maxim in China has been that wisdom lies in the past, that the way to excellence is to strive perpetually back towards the standard of the ancients, that change is practically synonymous with deterioration, and the idea of intellectual progress an insult to the sages of old. It is almost as though the worship of the Bible, which has been said to prevail in England, were translated into practice by making familiarity with its contents a supreme test of erudition ; or as though, to deal with centuries instead of millennia, acquaintance with Shakespeare were taken as a conclusive, instead of an incidental, standard of merit. But though one who has laid to heart the knowledge of human nature and of the springs of human action, with which Shakespeare’s pages teem, might have little in that respect left to learn, a knowledge of the Bible and of Shakespeare as profound as a Chinese student must possess of Confucius and the Odes, would hardly have engendered the discoveries of Newton and of

Watt ! There would be wanting—to use the word in the comprehensive sense in which it was employed by old writers—a knowledge of Mathematics. “He who knows not mathematics,” wrote Roger Bacon, “cannot know other sciences, and, what is more, he cannot discover his own ignorance or find the proper remedies.” And so even Chinese statesmen came to recognize that, if any great forward movement were to be accomplished, a change must be made in the objects of study. The barbarian might be, and probably was, a barbarian still; but he clearly possessed much valuable knowledge which the Chinaman did not possess, and which it was desirable he should acquire.

But how to introduce it? To propose the introduction of western knowledge into the curriculum of education was to assail the very stronghold of conservatism, the very principle of the national polity. The so-called literati, who constitute the mind of China, have been fed upon Chinese classics from the earliest dawn of their intelligence, and so with their fathers before them for a hundred generations. The lore of the sages has, for more than two thousand years, constituted, in their eyes, a “liberal education,” and a sufficient standard of knowledge and morality.

One scheme propounded by a Chinese literate, at Shanghai (in 1875), was to establish a college for the instruction of foreigners in the Chinese classics,

in order that they might become qualified to enter the mandarinatè through the recognized channel of the examinations, and that China might so gain the benefit of their administrative talent! It hardly occurred to him, probably, that such a supreme compliment as admission into the ranks of Chinese officialdom might not necessarily commend itself to the foreigner whom it was desired to attract. Besides, the object of the Government was not to import foreign men but foreign knowledge! So the Cabinet presided over by Prince Kung proposed,¹ in 1866, to introduce "mathematics" as a special subject of study—that term evidently representing in his mind, as it did in Bacon's, "all the physical science of the time." It was in a strain somewhat akin to that of the learned monk, that the Prince argued in favour of erecting a special department in the Tung-wen College, at Peking, "to which scholars of a high grade might be admitted, and in which men from the West should be invited to give instruction."

The project was approved; and to Mr. (now Sir Robert) Hart was entrusted the task of securing the services of efficient professors. Chairs were founded for Chemistry, Astronomy, French, English, Military Science and Chinese. But the literati were not yet prepared for the change.

¹ "Memorial by the Tsung-li Yamèn (Board of Foreign Affairs), submitting Reasons for the Education of Chinese in Foreign Science and Languages, and Proposing Rules for the Selection and Encouragement of Students." Vide Appendix A.

"Men from the West" might be appointed to professorships, but "scholars of high grade" had not yet opened their minds to the situation. In vain did the Prince contend, with a true perception of the national weakness, that to take up Western science as an object of study was only to receive back, at a more advanced stage, knowledge which Europe itself had formerly derived from China; and that, so far from it being "a shame to learn from the people of the West," the real disgrace lay in "being content to lag in the rear of others." Although still at the height of his reputation, and writing with the assent, if not at the instigation of great officials¹ who were willing to urge forward the laggard wheels of Chinese statesmanship, he was still before his time. A few inferior scholars only availed themselves of the opportunity, and anecdotes were told of comical effects produced by these early efforts.

Still the College had its effect, and has increased in reputation and influence as it has gone on. The principal, Dr. Martin, has opportunities, from his position, of instilling new ideas elsewhere than within the walls of his college. The number of students, limited at first to thirty, has been raised now to a hundred. There is attached to the

¹ "Provincial Governors, such as Tso Tsung-tang and Li Hung-chang, are firm in the conviction [that it is necessary to introduce the learning and mechanical arts of Western nations], and constantly presenting it in their addresses to the Throne."—*Ibid.*

college a printing-office from which are issued books containing scientific and other information. There is also a library of foreign and Chinese books, and a reading-room, well supplied with newspapers and magazines in various languages. The College may claim, therefore, to have done something, both in the training of youth and in the preparation of books for the diffusion of useful knowledge, to introduce a Western leaven into the Chinese mind; and in so doing it has fulfilled, in a measure, the object for which it was founded.

But the mass that had to be leavened was too immense. Individuals might be reached; but the millions remained impervious. Twenty years had elapsed, and Chinese engineers and chemists and strategists were yet to find. The Professor of military science died, indeed, shortly after his arrival, and no successor was appointed. Possibly had this branch of western knowledge formed, up to now, part and parcel of the Tung-wen curriculum, a Chinese von Moltke might have been evolved, and recent history differently written. Something has been done in this direction by founding naval schools, first at Foochow and afterwards at Canton, Nanking, and Tientsin; and if no Nelson has come to the fore, a class of cadets has been produced who at least possess some knowledge of seamanship, and some ideas of a naval career higher than "running" ships for their personal profit. But all this was still partial. Little or nothing had been done to affect the education of the nation. It was time,

obviously, to give another impulse to the machine. And a Cabinet under the leadership of Prince Chun, father of the reigning Emperor, and virtual Prime Minister at the time, resolved to point the educational wedge by advising¹ the introduction of "mathematics" into the competitive examinations.

In England, such reforms are mooted in Parliament; in China the method is by memorial to the Throne. And, somewhat as Western statesmen are believed to prepare the public mind occasionally for change through the medium of the Press, so the subject is led up to occasionally, in China, by the publication of such memorials in the *Peking Gazette*. There exist, at the Capital, certain officers called Censors, whose function it is to address the Emperor on any subject that appears to them to require notice. They accuse high mandarins of malpractice, they remonstrate about State backslidings, they occasionally advocate State action; but they more frequently oppose, with more than Papal obstinacy, the very idea of change. It is well understood that the hostility of the censors has been one great obstacle to the construction of railways, which leading Chinese statesmen have, for several years, been willing to undertake. But even among censors there are, seemingly, exceptions to the rule; and

¹ "Memorial from the Tsung-li Yamên, submitting a Proposal for the introduction of Mathematics and other Western Sciences into the Civil Competitive Examinations, Provincial and Metropolitan. d. 12th year of Kwangsü (1887). Appendix B.

one more enlightened than the rest reopened, in the spring of 1887—not improbably with high connivance—the question of bettering the educational system. His memorial was referred, by the Empress-Regent, to Prince Chun and the principal officers of State for consideration, and serves as a text for the document in which the latter advocate the proposed reform. It may help us to appreciate the conditions of the problem if we trace, in the memorialists' own language, the arguments by which they sought to establish the necessity for change.

A Chinese memorial is nothing if not historical, nor has any argument a chance of acceptance which is not based on precedent. The first care is, accordingly, to trace previous educational efforts, and to prove that the innovation is only a reversion to the methods of the past. So far back, then, we are told, as the reign of Taokwang (1820-50); again during that of his successor Hienfung, and again during that of the last emperor, Tungchih, high officers of State memorialized in favour of recognizing "mathematics" as a prime object of study :—

"But inasmuch as there were existing established rules governing the selection of graduates at the metropolitan and provincial examinations, it was most difficult to introduce innovations . . . and in each case the Boards decided that the proposed measure was a violation of established usages, and the matter was stopped !"

We have here presented, in a nutshell, the position of the obstructives ; and it would be difficult

to illustrate, better than in the following sentence, the quaint method of attack :—

“ Mathematics (urge the Reformers) is classed as one of the six arts (these being propriety (ceremonial), music, archery, charioteering, study, and mathematics); and during the Chow dynasty, in advancing their men of talent and virtue, they considered those who understood mathematics as belonging to the six professions. In the Tang dynasty, also, men qualified in mathematics were selected for official preferment.”

Other instances are quoted to prove that “ people of the present day who regard mathematics as a purely Western science, have not given the subject their serious attention;” and we come, eventually, to the kernel of the matter in a proposal whose boldness will be appreciated in proportion as we may have succeeded in picturing the rigidity of the system it was thought desirable to change :—

“ . . . We, the Ministers, are aware that the regulations governing the civil competitive examinations cannot be lightly changed; yet, for the sake of encouraging men of ability, the existing methods might be modified. It is proposed, therefore, that his Majesty direct the Provincial Literary Chancellors to issue, at the competitive examinations, besides the subject usually given in classics and poetry, a theme on mathematics; and should there be candidates for honours in that study, and they be found proficient, that their examination papers be submitted to the inspection of the Tsung-li Yamèn, and their names be officially registered. That, further, when the provincial examination occurs, the successful graduates first proceed to the Tsung-li Yamèn and there submit themselves to an examination in philosophy, mathematics, mechanics, engineering, naval and military tactics, marine artillery, torpedoes, international law and history; and, should any one be proficient in any of the above subjects, that he be sent to compete at the Civil Literary Examinations in Peking, under the same conditions as the other candidates.”

Unquestionably an ingenious method of introducing mathematics into the curriculum of education, and even of the examinations up to a high point, without hustling too severely the prejudices of the literary *élite*. In the memorialists' own words, "by adopting the above modifications for securing men of varied accomplishments, the existing regulations for examining and promoting literary men will not be changed, while they will serve the important purpose of encouraging men of talent."—Nor does the scheme end here. Having laid down certain lines for the introduction of Western Science as an object of study, they go on next to suggest a way of turning the newly cultivated talent to the best account. Those (mathematical) graduates who have passed successfully through the Metropolitan Examinations

"will be retained at the capital and wait for appointment to the Tung-wen College, where they will act as compilers and devote themselves to further study, until they may be sent to travel abroad or receive diplomatic appointments; selection to be made from time to time in accordance with merit and ability. In this manner those who manage our foreign relations will not be empty babblers, and they will moreover excel in usefulness those who are proficient in Western arts without the complementary literary qualification."

Such are the main features of this remarkable document, whose significance will be recognized by all who are familiar with Chinese antecedents. From contemptuous disdain of foreigners, leading statesmen had come to admit that we do, after all, know more than they; that "it is high time

some plan should be devised for infusing new elements of strength into the Government ;” and that “the only way of effecting this is to introduce the learning and mechanical arts of Western nations.” Foreigners themselves could hardly have desired to amend the wording. The misfortune is that, like too many other official utterances, it has, practically, failed of effect. Startled out of their serenity by the war with France and the experiences it had entailed, the authors of the movement had realized the necessity for the new departure they advised ; but others, like Wöjen, were unshaken in their opposition to change. Many high-class *literati* continued to take the view which the memorialists deprecate—that it is derogating from Chinese superiority, to condescend to learn from the foreigner ; thousands and tens of thousands of inferior standing, whose vanity is in inverse proportion to their knowledge, hold the same idea. An occasional incidental reference shows that the project is still above ground, and that some Mandarin more enlightened than the rest tries to get students in his neighbourhood to take it up ; but the practical effect upon the tone of the examinations has been next to null.

Individuals are touched in many ways. Chinese officials at Treaty Ports cannot help being affected in some measure. Nor can ambassadors and their suites, returning home after years of intercourse with Europeans, fail to leaven, each in his

degree, the circle with which he resumes contact. There has not been much time yet for this influence to work, but more may be expected from it as time goes on. Kwo Sung-tao, the first Minister to England, subsided into insignificance on his return. Chung-How, the first envoy to Russia, lost his reputation, and very nearly his head, through the bungle he made at Livadia. Li Fung-pao, the first Minister to Berlin, was not of any great account before he left China, and was disgraced, on a charge of peculation, after his return. The Marquis Tseng was the first who might have been expected to take a high position ; and the expectation was realized. He was made a member of the Foreign Board, and might have exerted valuable influence had he not been prematurely cut off. That a change is being worked, even in the spirit of the *literate* dream, may be inferred from the case of Hung-chun, late Minister to St. Petersburg and Berlin, who was recalled, I believe, for the express purpose of taking the seat left vacant by Tseng. Hung-chun was the Chwang-Yuan, or Optimus, of Hanlin graduates of his year—a degree which represents the *crème de la crème* of literary talent in the Empire. Twenty years ago, such a man would have scorned an European Mission. But the limitations of the Chinese educational system may be inferred, on the other hand, from the fact that Hung-chun's knowledge left him as a child in the hands of the Russians, in respect to the geography of the Pamirs.

CHAPTER IV.

ATTAINMENTS.

It may not be uninteresting, now we have noted the capacity and limitations of the Chinese educational system, to examine the validity of the plea by which it was sought to conciliate the scholiasts whose self-sufficiency and self-interest impel them to reject attempts at reform. The subject has, it must be confessed, more academic than practical interest; still it has an interest greater even than the Chinese suspect, and bearings of which their "limitations" would certainly prevent their realizing the extent.

"As to the imputation," says Prince Kung, in the Memorial already quoted, "of abandoning the methods of China, is it not altogether a fictitious charge? For on inquiry it will be found that Western science had its root in the astronomy of China, which Western scholars confess themselves to have derived from Eastern lands. They have minds adapted to reasoning and abstruse study, so that they were able to deduce from it new arts which shed a lustre on those nations; but in reality the original belonged to China, and Europeans learned from us."

The statement is awry, but it does not follow that it is wholly baseless. Neither in accuracy of

premiss nor in severity of logic, will Chinese argument always satisfy the requirements of scientific accuracy. Nor would any claim be too extravagant where the national vanity is at stake. Josephus affirms that Abraham taught astronomy to the Egyptians ; and the Chinese are capable of claiming Abraham as an "original" connection !

Astronomical knowledge of a kind the Chinese certainly possessed, before the days of Ricci and Schaal ; but history will hardly support a pretension that it is to them we are indebted for our first conceptions on the subject. The Prince's statement must be approached—if approached at all—with a charitable willingness to perceive a modicum of truth where such may be discerned, without holding him too closely *au pied de la lettre*. Abel Remusat suggested,¹ more than sixty years ago, that Europe was indebted to China—not, certainly, for the beginnings of all knowledge, but for a good many first ideas which European brains have since perfected ; and I may perhaps venture to recall the arguments of the essay in which he sustained the thesis.

History, it is contended, gives the claim at least this measure of support. It shows that circumstances were favourable, at a certain period, for the transmission to Europe of certain inven-

¹ *Mémoires sur les relations politiques des Princes Chrétiens, et particulièrement des rois de France, avec les Empereurs Mongols, par Abel Remusat : "Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres."* Vols. vi. and vii. Paris : 1826-7.

tions then familiar in the East, and which actually made their appearance, for the first time, shortly afterwards in the West. It establishes that what is occurring now is but a reversal of what took place 600 years ago, when the Mongol irruption combined with the Crusades to level, for a time, the barrier that had grown up between East and West—a barrier that was reconstituted by the interposition of Islam, but which is now being outflanked, if not overthrown afresh, by the maritime enterprise of Europe. Then it was the overflow of the Tartar hordes which threatened to submerge Europe; now it is the restlessness of Europe which is disturbing the successor of the Great Khan. The question is, whether the Mongol outbreak of the thirteenth century—instead of being, as we are apt to conceive, wholly destructive—may not have been effective in conveying to Europe certain knowledge that had originated in Asia, but had been confined there by the isolation of its people.

It must not, of course, be overlooked that this was one only of the great movements which were bringing the nations of the old world into contact, on the confines of Europe and Asia. The Mohammedans had conquered the Holy Land, and four crusades had flowed and ebbed in the effort to dislodge them, before the Tartars added their quota to the general confusion. Guizot has emphasized, in his well-known Lectures,¹ the enlightening effect

¹ "*Histoire Générale de la Civilisation en Europe*," etc. Guizot. Paris, 1828.

upon Europe of the contact with Greek and Saracenic civilization. We are concerned, now, solely with the Mongols, and need consider the Mohammedan complication only in so far as it tended to promote intercourse between West and East, by suggesting a community of interests arising out of a common hostility to Islam.

The Mongol Empire may be said to have begun with Genghis Khan's establishment of his capital at Karakorum, A.D. 1206. His tribe had already succeeded in subjecting its neighbours, and all Tartary soon acknowledged his supremacy. Then ensued the great series of conquests which whelmed Asia and spread terror throughout Europe. Impelled, it would seem, by pent-up energies which had found sudden outlet, the Tartars penetrated Russia, overran Poland and Hungary,² and threw their shadow over France. It was dread of their approach which inspired Louis IX. with the historical pun about Tartars and Tartarus that is said to have permanently affected the spelling of the word. Gregory IX. proposed a crusade against the new enemy; but failed, as much, it would seem, on account of the terror they inspired as of his differences with the Emperor who was himself menaced. Innocent IV. sent envoys, in 1225, to the Mongol generals who commanded in Russia and Asia Minor, with the double object of commending

² Batou, grandson of Genghis Khan, established himself in Kapchak (S.E. Russia) in 1224, and overran Poland and Hungary in 1240-1.

Christianity and deprecating their violence ; but seems to have taken little by his motion, although Batou passed his envoys on to the Great Khan, who sent letters in return.

The wave had, however, spent itself in Europe ; the invaders had been compelled to retire from Hungary, mainly it would seem by the very desolation they had caused ; and when, in 1248, the French king was halting at Cyprus, on his way to the Holy Land, ambassadors reached him from the Mongol Satrap of Persia with proposals of allied action. But St. Louis seems to have been more anxious about the conversion than the co-operation of his would-be friends.¹ He failed, at any rate, to knit an alliance which might have altered the fate of his expedition ; for, though the Mongol flood had begun to subside in Europe, the tide was still flowing in Asia. Houlagou completed, in 1258, his proposed campaign against Bagdad, overthrew the power of the Khalifs, establishing a dynasty which was to last for nearly a hundred years in Persia, and commenced, shortly after, the movement on Palestine in which he had wished to secure European co-operation.

The whole vast empire which the Mongols built up was swayed at the outset by one man ; and so

¹ The story of this much-disputed mission is elaborately discussed in Remusat's essay. The proposal seems to have been that one should attack the Sultan of Egypt while the other attacked the Khalif, so as to prevent either rendering the other assistance.

long as that unity was kept up, the invading hordes were irresistible. But the time came when the nomadic impulse subsided, and the central connection grew weak. The Tartars of Russia and the Tartars of Persia all but ceased in their allegiance, and were thrown on their own resources. Then, before the counter-flow of Mohammedanism, the tide began to turn; and the great Satraps who, in the first burst of victory, had demanded tribute from Western Europe, tried to revive the crusades by offers of alliance against the common foe. Envoys from Abagu, who had succeeded Houlagou on the throne of Persia, reached Pope Clement with overtures of co-operation, about the time (1267) that preparations were being made for the final crusade, which was to cost King Louis his life and to lay the foundation of our Prince Edward's military reputation; but Louis wasted his resources and died in Tunis, leaving Edward to conduct a barren, though brilliant campaign. Fresh proposals were made to the latter (in 1274) shortly after his return; and again, three years later, a Tartar embassy visited London in search of help.

It was to the Pope, apparently, as the acknowledged head of Christendom, that these appeals were generally addressed, but they seem to have been treated somewhat as circular despatches, to be passed on after perusal. It is on certain of these documents, unearthed by him in the archives of France, that Remusat's interesting

narrative, and equally interesting speculations, are mainly founded; for, though the Mongol envoys failed to achieve an active alliance, they opened up an intercourse whose extent had been well-nigh forgotten till his researches disclosed the buried record. An embassy, for instance, in 1285, from Argoun,¹ the then ruler of Persia, was answered by the despatch of envoys from France in 1288; the arrival of Tartar envoys in England is noted in the following, and second, succeeding years; and the despatch, finally, of a letter from our own Edward II., from Northampton, in 1307, brings us near the close of the story. The Tartar Sovereigns of Persia succumbed to the Mussulman in 1355, and the intercourse which had lasted for nearly half a century was again broken off.

Remusat counts nine leading attempts (*tentatives principales*) made by Christian princes to connect themselves with the Mongols, and fifteen embassies sent by the Tartars into Europe; and he makes the striking reflection that history might have been changed if the negotiations had succeeded and East and West had combined against Islam. But the course of events ran otherwise; the crusading spirit had well-nigh evaporated, and the Tartars seem to have got little but civil answers and commendations of Christianity in reply to their pro-

¹ Remusat notes that Argoun's letter (the original of which he discovered in the royal archives) still acknowledges the suzerainty of Kublai, the Mongol conqueror of China, whom Marco Polo found reigning at Peking.

posals. Nothing, indeed, is more curious than the constant rumours of successful proselytism which seem to have been current in Europe during these negotiations, and which have survived to our own day in the mysterious legends of Prester John that still float hazily in the atmosphere of tradition. Again and again do reports seem to have gained credence that the Tartar ruler of Persia, nay, the very Great Khan himself, had embraced Christianity. The wish was, no doubt, in some degree father to the thought; but it is also likely that the Mongol chiefs—indifferent about religion at the core, and wanting Christian help against the Moslem—sent specious messages, which the European ecclesiastics and Georgian and Armenian Christians who served as go-betweens coloured still more highly in delivery.

Enough has, however, been said of the political intercourse between the two regions and of the conditions under which it arose. We may go on, now, to review the suggested effect on European civilization.

“Two systems of civilization had,” Remusat remarks, “arisen, spread, and perfected themselves at the two extremities of the old world, through the effect of independent causes, without communication, and, consequently, without mutual influence. Suddenly the events of war and political combinations place in contact these two great bodies, so long strangers one to the other. Solemn ambassadorial interviews are not the only occasions of approach between them; others more obscure, but more efficacious, were created through unperceived but innumerable ramifications—through the journeys of private travellers drawn to the two ends of the world, with commercial objects,

along the paths of envoys or armies. The Mongol irruption, overthrowing everything, covered all distances, filled up all gaps, and brought together all peoples; the events of war transported thousands of individuals to immense distances from the places where they were born."

History has preserved the memory of journeys of kings (of Georgia and Armenia), of ambassadors, and of missionaries, who were led by political motives to the depths of Asia, and of distinguished Mongols who came to Rome, Barcelona, Valence, Lyons, Paris, London and Northampton. But how many persons less known must have followed in their footsteps, either as servants or drawn by the desire of gain, or by curiosity to visit hitherto unknown countries !

"Chance has preserved the names of a few. The first envoy who came to find the King of Hungary on behalf of the Tartars was an Englishman, who had been banished from his country, and who, after wandering all over Asia, had ended by taking service with the Mongols. A Flemish cordwainer met, in the depths of Tartary, a woman of Metz who had been carried off from Hungary, a Parisian jeweller whose brother was established at Paris on the Grand-Pont, and a young man from the environs of Rouen who had chanced to be at the capture of Belgrade; he saw there also Russians, Hungarians, and Flemings. A chorister, after having travelled through Eastern Asia, came back to die in the cathedral at Chartres; a Tartar was helmet-maker (*fournisseur de casques*) to Philip-le-Bel. Jean de Plan-Carpin (one of the emissaries sent by Pope Innocent in 1245) found, at the Court of Gayouk, a Russian Gentleman who served as interpreter; merchants of Breslau, Poland, and Austria accompanied him in his journey to Tartary; others came back with him through Russia. These were Genoese, Pisans, and two Venetian merchants whom chance had led to Bokhara. From thence they had followed a Mongol envoy whom Houlagou was sending to Kublai, sojourned

several years in China and Tartary, came back with letters from the Great Khan for the Pope, returned to the Great Khan, taking with them the celebrated Marco Polo, and again quitted the Court of Kublai to return to Venice."

Journeys of this kind were frequent also in the following century. We may well believe, too, as Remusat suggests, that those which are remembered form a small proportion only of those which were undertaken, and that there were, at that time, more people able to make long journeys than to write a relation of them. "Many of these adventurers remained, no doubt, and died in the countries they had gone to visit; others returned home as obscure as they had set out, but the imagination filled with what they had seen, to talk about it in their families; exaggerating, no doubt; but leaving, amid many ridiculous stories, in monasteries, in the castles of the nobles, and even in the lowest strata of society, precious seeds destined to fructify a little later." Not only were new roads opened up to commerce, and for the exchange of Eastern and Western products, but, "what was still better worth, foreign customs, unknown notions, extraordinary productions were presented to the minds of Europeans who had been confined, since the fall of the Roman Empire, within a too narrow circle." People began to appreciate the importance of the East; interest was awakened in the arts, creeds and language of its people; the desire of discovery was stimulated.

It would be beside the purpose to examine the results, in Asia itself, of a movement so powerful and so far-reaching. We are concerned only with the effects in Europe; and here is the language in which Remusat states a conclusion "not perhaps entirely new, but to which the facts he had been reviewing lend a support it hardly possessed" before he had marshalled them :—

"Before the establishment of the relations to which the Crusades first, and still more the Mongol irruption, gave rise between the East and the West, the greater part of the inventions which signalized the close of the Middle Ages had been known for centuries to the Asiatics. The polarity of the loadstone had been observed and utilized in China from remote ages. Explosive powders had been known from all time to the Hindoos and Chinese.¹ The latter had, in the tenth century, thunder chariots (*chars-à-foudre*) which appear to have been cannon; . . . and Houlagou, when starting for Persia, had in his army a corps of Chinese artillery. On another hand, the *editio princeps* of the (Chinese) classics, engraved on wooden blocks, is of the year 952. . . . The use of paper money was adopted by the Mongols in China,² and was known to the Persians under the same name the Chinese gave it. . . . Finally, playing cards . . . were conceived in China in the year 1120.—There are, besides, in the beginnings of each of these inventions, peculiar traits which seem to indicate their origin. I will not speak of the compass, whose antiquity in China Hager seems to me to have victoriously maintained, but which must have found its way to Europe by means of the Crusades, before the Mongol

¹ Mayers argues that gunpowder probably became known to the Chinese about 550 A.D., and then merely to a partial extent and from foreign sources."

² Marco Polo mentions paper money as one of the most marvellous proofs of the power and intelligence of the Great Khan. But its use seems to have been known to the Chinese long before the Mongol dynasty.

irruption, as proved by Jacques Vitry and others. But the most ancient playing cards, those of the game of *tarots*,¹ have a remarkable analogy in their shape, the designs they bear, their size and number, with the cards used by the Chinese. Cannon were the first firearms used in Europe; they were also, it would seem, the only ones which the Chinese knew at that epoch. . . . We have the example of another usage which manifestly followed the same route—viz. that of the *swan-pan*, or arithmetical machine of the Chinese, which was, without doubt, brought to Europe by the army of Batou, and which has so spread in Russia and Poland that women of the people who cannot read use nothing else for their housekeeping accounts and their petty dealings. The conjecture which attributes a Chinese origin to the primitive idea of European typography is so natural that it was put forward even before the circumstances which rendered it probable had been collated; it was the idea of Paul Jove and of De Mendoza, that a Chinese book might have been brought by way of Scythia and Muscovy before the Portuguese reached India. It was developed by an anonymous Englishman, and if one puts aside the printing in movable type, which is certainly an European invention, it is difficult to see what can be opposed to a hypothesis so full of likelihood.

“But the supposition acquires a much higher degree of probability if it is applied to the *ensemble* of the discoveries in question. All had been made in Eastern Asia; all were ignored in the West. Communication takes place, is prolonged during a century and a half, and hardly has another century elapsed before they are all known in Europe. Their source is enveloped in clouds; the country where they exhibited themselves, the men who have produced them, are equally matter of doubt; it is not the enlightened countries which are their theatre; it is not the learned who are their authors: men of the people, obscure artisans, cause to shine, one after another, these unexpected lights. Nothing seems better to show the effect of communication; nothing could accord better with what we have said above of in-

¹ A game played at one time, in France and Italy, under the names of *tarots* and *tarocchino*. The cards bore figures of money, swords, people, etc., etc.

visible channels, of unperceived ramifications, by which the knowledge of Eastern people was able to penetrate Europe. Most of these inventions present themselves at first in the state of infancy where the Asiatics left them, and this circumstance hardly allows us to entertain a doubt as to their origin. Some were immediately put in practice; others remain for a time enveloped in an obscurity which hides their progress; and are taken, on their appearance, for new inventions: all, perfected soon and, as it were, fecundated by the genius of Europeans, act together, and communicate to the human intelligence the greatest movement of which the memory has been preserved. So, by this shock of peoples, was dispelled the darkness of the Middle Ages."

Such are the facts which Remusat established, and such the conclusions to which he was led. They bear upon a page of history which was previously little understood, and which is still comparatively unfamiliar. The Mongol irruption is still, for most of us, a sort of historical nightmare. The Mohammedan invasion of Palestine stands forth crisp and clear; but the subjection of Georgia and Armenia to the Mongol impresses us faintly by comparison. Saladin we know, and Acre we know; but Bagdad is associated in our minds with Haroun-al-Raschid far more clearly than with Houlagou. The crusades of St. Louis and Prince Edward are leading incidents in schoolboy lore; but many of us fail to realize that intercourse, so prolonged and far-reaching, occurred between the princes of Europe and the satraps of the Great Khan, or that Marco Polo and his relatives were three only among a host of Europeans who were wandering over Asia. Even Remusat's brilliant essay hardly saved from fresh oblivion many of the incidents he relates.

Yet the story has so much interest that those to whom it is familiar will, perhaps, pardon its repetition; while others will admit, for their intrinsic interest, the lengthy quotations necessary to elucidate his contention. Such statements as Prince Kung's savour too much of the obsolete pretence to national and imperial superiority over the rest of the world, not to repel Western readers; but for a more modest claim—that China supplied the germ of many inventions which were carried, in Europe, to a higher pitch of excellence—there is, clearly, something to be said. If it will facilitate the acceptance, by her *literati*, of knowledge in which “Western scholars” are admittedly pre-eminent, to believe that it “had its root in the astronomy of China,” by all means let them move in their own way and justify the movement by their own logic! “Call it,” says a recent Chinese writer, “Western science, and our scholars will think it shame to meddle with it; but once let it be known that it had its origin in China, and they will be ashamed to show ignorance of it.”

The exclamation shows that there are Chinese who can perceive the truth, and can assess the arrogance of their countrymen at its exact value. The trouble is that we don't seem to get beyond the admission. The Japanese grappled with the situation at once. Perceiving the superiority of Western knowledge, they set themselves to acquire it. Almost every Japanese general of distinction, almost every Japanese statesman of repute, has included a

voyage to Europe in his education ; many of them have taken degrees in European universities ; hundreds of their subordinates have done the same ; thousands of Japanese of all classes annually follow the example. And they have their reward.

Given the premiss, the deduction was so obvious that it suggested itself also to the Chinese. Those who had distinguished themselves by the new mathematical test were to be sent abroad to travel, and to improve the knowledge they had acquired. A certain number were actually sent ; and the effect has, *pace* the Censors, been generally good. The first lieutenant who fought the *Tsi-yuen*, off Yashan, while his captain took refuge below, was educated in the United States.¹ One of Li Hung-chang's trusted advisers is a Chinese barrister who qualified at the Temple. But the number is infinitesimal ; nor is there an instance, that I am aware of, of a returned student being placed in an executive post. It is the old-fashioned civil mandarin who continues to render every department inefficient by his corruption, and the old-fashioned military mandarin who has been literally "walked round" by his Japanese antagonists.

Progress there has been. As there is scarcely a mechanical idea which the Chinese had not precon-

¹ The Chinese Consul at Fusan, at the time the Japanese invaded Corea, is said to have been educated in America. He sent warning to Ping-Yang that a Japanese force was marching from Gensang, and pointed out where it could be met and checked. But General Yeh pooh-poohed the advice.

ceived—but failed to develop; so there is scarcely a foreign appliance, we shall find, which they have not pretended to adopt—but impoverished by going only half way. Inquiry into the origin and circumstances of these various movements may help to explain the origin and character, also, of the limitations. It may enable us, in the meantime, to regard even the vanity of a Chinese literate with less impatience, if we reflect that his ancestors were really beforehand with the germs of many scientific inventions, and did evolve a political system which, whatever its defects, has civilized Eastern Asia, and supplied an enduring organization while historic Empires have risen and disappeared.

PROGRESS AND RESOURCES.

CHAPTER V.

SIGNS OF PROGRESS.

It was once pithily remarked that the Municipal Council of Shanghai are the best missionaries in China. What was meant was that the foreign settlement at Shanghai serves as a practical illustration of the advantages of Western civilization. Chinese from other parts of the empire who pass through it—and thousands do so every year—may see handsome houses and well-kept streets lighted by the electric light or by gas; they may see machinery, water-works, telegraphs, telephones, steamers, public gardens; and the ideas thus acquired must percolate in some measure through the interior. What is true of Shanghai is true also of Hongkong; that once barren rock has grown, under English rule, into a port of first-class rank and an industrial centre of astonishing activity. Through Hongkong annually pass more than seven million tons of shipping, docks and factories have been constructed, and companies have been formed for numerous forms of enterprise in which Chinese residents take an active interest. There is an

immense passenger traffic by the steamers which ply daily between Hongkong and the great neighbouring city of Canton, and it would be absurd to suppose that what the voyagers see can fail of some educational effect. Then there is gradually making way a new literature, foreign in its inspiration, which tends to explain the elementary principles of science and the leading features of social life in other countries. Books have been translated for this purpose under foreign auspices, and there have been established in Hongkong, Canton, Shanghai, and Tientsin, Chinese newspapers which must disseminate new ideas.

It has been a standing marvel to Europe that, with all these educational advantages and incitements to progress, China should have been so slow to accept the ideas and appliances that have been pressed upon her, for a generation, by the West. The conditions under which the mind of the nation is trained may help, perhaps, to elucidate the mystery. Isolated and wrapped in her own thoughts, as she had been, China had still not escaped all contact with the West. Along the great Central Asian highway, intercourse of some kind and degree was had with the Syrian provinces of the Roman Empire, if not with Rome and Byzantium themselves. Chinese annals mention the presence, in circulation, of coins which we can identify from the description as Parthian, during the dynasty of the Han. Roman coins have been found in Shanse; and when

political disturbances rendered the land route unsafe, a Roman embassy is said to have come by sea to Tongking. The Romans were followed by the Arabs, and the Arabs by the Dutch. We had ourselves been trading at Canton long before Sir Henry Pottinger negotiated the Treaty of Nanking. Agents of the East India Company had ventured as far North as Ningpo; anchoring their ships amid the Chusan Archipelago, and carrying on a traffic which seems to have partaken somewhat of the nature of barter, with the mainland. But all this contact was external, and left China ignorant of Western inventions and knowledge. It would be scarcely an exaggeration to say that, when Lord Elgin and Baron Gros exacted conditions of larger intercourse in 1858, she had hardly progressed much, in respect of industrial appliances, beyond the point she had reached at the time of the Crusades.

It was perhaps a natural consequence of the pressure under which China was opened to foreign trade, that the first indications given of a willingness to adopt foreign methods were in the direction of warlike appliances. Attributing the defeats she had experienced to the superiority of foreign weapons and warships, she conceived a natural wish to place herself on an equality with her late adversaries. And this appreciation of the value of foreign weapons led to the creation of dockyards and arsenals. The first arsenal in China, on foreign lines, was begun by Dr. (now Sir Halliday)

Macartney, in 1863. The episode deserves note as signalizing the first erection of foreign machinery—at any rate under Chinese auspices—on Chinese soil, and the first introduction to mechanical appliances of the Chinese statesman who has since shown the clearest perception of China's weaknesses and strength, and who has taken the lead in all her progressive undertakings.

Dr. Macartney had been given leave from the 99th Regiment, to enable him to take special service under Li Hung-chang, who was then Governor of the province of Kiangsu, and was laying the foundation of his great career by his efforts to crush the Taeping rebellion which had its chief stronghold in the neighbouring region. It was while living in Li's camp, outside the west gate of Shanghai, that he conceived the possibility of making better powder, better shells, and better guns than the Chinese were able to produce. He had to learn the science *pari passu* with his experiments; and the story of his persistent and eventually successful efforts to get a Boxer fuse turned by a Chinese carpenter with a common Chinese lathe, while he was making his first mould with his own hands at the camp gate, contrasts romantically with a list of the great establishments that have since been founded at the most important centres in the Empire. Suffice it to say that he succeeded so far as to make shot and shell with which—and with Chinese soldiers whom he had himself drilled—he was able, within a few months,

to capture the city of Sedong. And so the thing grew. Li Hung-chang authorized, shortly after, the construction of an arsenal—still on a limited scale—within the city of Sungkiang; and the machinery was moved, after Gordon's successes, to Soochow. But the grand opportunity came with the dispersal of the Lay-Osborne flotilla, which had been acquired, by Prince Kung's wish, to provide China with the beginnings of a navy, but which was to be disbanded in consequence of differences that were to change the lines of Chinese naval reform. The ships were to be scattered, and sold where they could find purchasers; but there was, connected with them, a floating arsenal—elaborate machinery for the construction of every muniment of war—of which it was less easy to dispose. Li Hung-chang had never then, probably, seen any machinery more elaborate than the chain pump worked by foot labour, which his countrymen use to irrigate their fields; and it was not a hopeful task to induce him to purchase all this elaborate plant. But Macartney succeeded; succeeded, with the aid of certain English artillerymen and steamer engineers, in setting everything in place; and then invited Li to witness it at work! The surprise of a man who had previously been unacquainted with mechanical power, at seeing the whole of this varied machinery put suddenly in motion, was dramatic. But doubt and hesitation were at an end. The arsenal was established; and, after the capture of Nanking from the rebels, it was removed to that

city, where I had the pleasure, in 1872, as Dr. Macartney's guest, of going through a factory complete in every detail, and making everything from gun-caps to howitzers and cannon.

I have dwelt so long on this first interesting episode in the erection of machinery on Chinese soil, that I must pass briefly over the construction, shortly after, under the auspices of M. Giquel, of an arsenal and dockyard at the well-known port of Foochow. These examples were quickly copied elsewhere, and there exist, now, arsenals at all the principal maritime centres, from Tientsin to Canton. The establishments at Nanking and Tientsin are confined to the manufacture of guns and ammunition; but dockyards were added at Foochow and Shanghai, and a number of steamers built, the machinery for which was imported from Europe while the guns were cast in the adjoining workshops. The Government wanted warships as well as weapons, and here were the beginnings of the Chinese navy. But it was an epoch of rapid invention, and Chinese statesmen soon realized that their new ships had been left behind, by the modern ironclad, as far as their junks had been behind the gunboats of the allied fleet. Ironclads and fast cruisers were ordered, accordingly, from Newcastle and Stettin; and two or three of the latter had arrived when the quarrel with France, about Tongking, came to demonstrate—if the Mandarins had been capable of appreciating the lesson—that something beyond the possession of ships was

needed to make them the equals of Europeans at sea. More ironclads have been purchased since, and China possessed, at the outbreak of war with Japan, a mechanically and numerically powerful fleet. With a prescience, too, which has not yet extended to the army, naval colleges had been inaugurated at Foochow, and more recently at Nanking and Tientsin, for the instruction of cadets. An English naval officer, Captain Lang, was engaged as instructor to the Northern Squadron, which progressed favourably in discipline under his auspices. It boots not to recapitulate here, how all this expenditure and all these preparations were neutralized by the conceit and corruption and consequent incapacity which characterize Chinese official life. Remusat's aphorism that Asiatics are always punished for their disdain of European knowledge by the smallness of the advantage which this disdain allows them to derive, has never received a more apt illustration. Believing themselves capable of managing their fleet alone, certain officers inaugurated a cabal which obliged Captain Lang to retire from his command. His control had extended, at best, only to matters of seamanship and gunnery, while in matters of administration the Chinese ruled supreme ; and Chinese ideas are, as we shall have frequent occasion to remark, peculiar. If we conceive the effect, on a modern fleet, of a system under which individual mandarins are trusted with funds to procure ammunition, and commanders farm the supply of stores,

we may have less difficulty in understanding the inefficiency of the Chinese fleet when the need for its services arose.

Side by side with the navy there has been created also a mercantile fleet, under the title of "China Merchants S.N. Company," which has risen from small beginnings to a total of twenty-six vessels, valued at Tls. 2,000,000 (about 350,000*l.*). This also owes its conception to Li Hung-Chang, who procured for it large subventions and the guarantee of a considerable source of income in the shape of freight for tribute rice. The great inland waterway known as the Grand Canal had fallen into disrepair amid the varied troubles which had beset the country ; and the moment was opportune for a progressive statesman to procure recognition of a new means of carriage. The motive was also avowed of ousting foreigners from the coast and riverine trade ; but if that hope were really entertained, its realization has probably been relegated to a remote future. The managers are content, for the present, to take a share of the traffic and run amicably with their foreign rivals.

Though manned by Chinese, these steamers are commanded and officered by foreigners, and confine themselves entirely to the ports open by treaty to foreign trade, from an apprehension, apparently, that if they began plying elsewhere foreigners might claim to follow the example. An attempt was made, some time ago, to run a steamer between the non-treaty ports of Hainan and the adjacent

peninsula ; but the authorities set their faces against it, and it necessarily failed. The incident may seem trifling, but it illustrates a habit of interference with private enterprise that seriously hinders progress in China. It may be noted, perhaps, as another peculiarity, that when the Governor of Formosa purchased two steamers to aid in developing the trade of his island, the patrons of the "China Merchants' Company" objected to their trading to the north as an intrusion on the latter's preserve ! The decentralization of provinces and the immixture of officials in commercial enterprise lead to some very curious complications ; and it will not be till the lesson has been learned of leaving commercial enterprise to private energy, and of treating finance from an Imperial instead of from an individual and provincial view, that industrial movement on a great scale can be expected. Even an old converted gunboat which runs between Amoy and the opposite Formosan port of Tamsui, and a small steamer plying on the coast between Hongkong, Foochow and Wenchow are registered in Hongkong under the British flag, although Chinese-owned ; and these, with some two or three steamers owned by native merchants in Shanghai represent, I believe, so far, the sum of private ship-owning enterprise.

Yet the willingness with which Chinese invest in steamship companies, and run steamers of their own, in Hongkong and the Straits, proves that they are not personally unwilling to engage in such ventures.

The population of the southern provinces, from which the inhabitants of those colonies are mainly derived, is indeed—in contrast to usual experience, which associates energy preferably with the north—the most energetic and enterprising in China ; and will supply, in all probability, the pioneers of mining and industrial enterprise when the wisdom of allowing them scope comes to be forced upon the Ruling class. The development of a considerable steam launch trade on the river below Canton may afford an illustration of this readiness, as well as of the difficulties which the authorities are apt to place in the way of every form of progress. The whole description given by H.M.'s Consul of the state of the boating industry conveys, indeed, a picture of evolution that will do more to illustrate the situation than many pages of disquisition.

“ Twenty years ago sails and sweeps were the powers used ; then came stern-wheels worked by man power—these are still extensively used. The next stage was a tow-boat lashed alongside a passenger boat ; and the next, it may be hoped, will be the amalgamation of the tug and tow.

“ These stern-wheel passenger boats are a striking feature on the busy river at Canton. They are long, low, box-looking craft, the largest being of about 100 tons measurement. The inside of the box is divided into compartments, in which passengers lie down or squat, for there is not head room. The roof is flat, and on this sit a crowd of passengers, sheltered from the weather by stiff bamboo mats. At the stern is the compartment where the men work. The largest kind of boat has twenty-four men. The machinery on a large boat consists of four shafts laid across the boat at a distance of three feet from each other. At each of these

shafts six men work a sort of treadmill ; holding on to a cross-bar above with their hands, while their feet work the three wooden pedals which are fixed on three iron arms radiating from the centre. The pedals along the shaft are so disposed that the six men do not keep step. These series of treadmills are connected with the stern paddle-wheel by means of cranks, so that one revolution of the treadmill makes one revolution of the stern-wheel. The stern-wheel is 8 ft. in diameter, and has eight floats, and when the men are working easy it makes sixteen to eighteen revolutions a minute, and the speed attained is three and a half to four miles an hour. On a long journey the men rest in turn, three working to one resting, and in this way the boat is kept going during the whole of the day. The cost of the iron machinery does not exceed \$100, but it is of the roughest description, and much power is lost by friction. The pay of the men is 25 c. a day—at present equivalent to 6*d.* ; so the motive power in a large boat, capable of carrying 200 passengers and several tons of cargo, comes to 12*s.* a day."

And, all this, with the object-lesson of steamers in full view ! The number of launches is, however, constantly increasing. They are largely used by officials and in the Customs and Preventive services ; they are employed also to tow passenger boats. Yet they are heavily taxed, and an intention has been officially expressed of curtailing their number as opportunity offers ! The picture which Mr. Brennan draws of their activity, and still more of the conditions which they are destined to supersede, may serve, in the meantime, as a characteristic illustration of the ingenuity of the Chinese artisan, and of the limitations by which enterprise in China is checked.

Another instance of progress resulting from hostile stress is the Telegraph, which now stretches

from north to south and from east to west across the Empire. The story of the electric telegraph in China is curious and illustrative. It dawns with an attempt made in 1865, by an Englishman named Reynolds, to construct a line of about a dozen miles from Shanghai to the mouth of the Hwang-poo. It would not have been the slightest use, in those days, to ask permission ; but there might, he thought, be a chance for the accomplished fact—and he tried, after making every preparation, to rush the thing through before it could be hindered. I do not remember whether the entire distance was completed, but it was certainly never worked. The officials frowned, and the country people promptly pulled down the poles. The proceedings of Chinese mobs in such cases are one of the mysteries which foreigners never succeed in fathoming. That the people are jealous and superstitious is beyond doubt, and these notions may, on occasion, impel them to independent action. But it is also beyond doubt that their superstitions are as easily played upon by the officials and *literati* and gentry of the district, as a piano is played on by an expert musician ; and where the impulse that led to the destruction of that first telegraph line originated, it would be hard to predicate.

The Great Northern Telegraph Company next undertook, in 1871, to lay a cable along the coast between Hongkong and Shanghai. Hongkong being a British colony, there was of course no difficulty at that end ; nor was there, I believe, any

attempt to interfere with proceedings on the coast. But great uneasiness was shown by the officials when the Yangtze was reached, and it became a question of laying the cable up the river and landing it at Shanghai. The shore end was, in fact, landed surreptitiously in the middle of the night; and for some time no one, not even foreigners, knew the precise spot. The excitement gradually subsided, and when they could venture to disclose their hiding place, the Company's agents invited certain wealthy Chinese and began telegraphing for their edification. They were greatly interested, but very sceptical; till one more venturesome than the rest undertook to telegraph to a correspondent in Hongkong for a consignment of goods by the next steamer. Here was a test: would the goods come? They did! And the fact of telegraphy was established.

But it was still far from being recognized, even in principle, by the Chinese Government. A loop of the coast cable was landed at Amoy, also without permission, in 1873; but it was not till 1875 that sanction was given to the accomplished facts; nor was it till six years later that the Imperial Government was brought to admit the desirability of constructing telegraph lines ashore. The Kuldja dispute with Russia was to supply the pressure which led to that consummation. The remarkable treaty which Chunghow concluded at Livadia convinced even Peking that isolation might be inconvenient; and in June, 1881, an overland line was

sanctioned, from Tientsin to Shanghai, which placed it practically in communication with Europe. The spirit of obstruction which finds a congenial home in the various "Boards" was able to delay, three years longer, the prolongation of the line to Peking; but, when the connection had been once effected, extensions were made with a rapidity that one would fain see emulated in other respects. Lines have since been erected to encircle and traverse the whole Empire—westward from Shanghai across central China to the capitals of Szechuen and Yunnan; southward along the coast to Canton and the frontier of Tongking, and from Tientsin northward across Manchuria to Heilung-chiang on the frontier of Siberia; while the great islands of Formosa and Hainan have been connected by cable with the mainland. Connections have been effected with the Russian land lines at Blagovestchenk, on the banks of the Amoor, and at Hungchun on the river Tiumen which separates Corea from Primorsk. Another line is in course of construction, across Shanse, to join the Russian line at Kiachta; and a junction with British India is being effected on the borders of Yunnan.

An initial difficulty, which may have occurred to the reader, was that of telegraphing Chinese characters. This was overcome by an ingenious system of numerals, to represent characters, invented by M. Viguier, a Frenchman, who was at the time a member of the Customs staff. A further question that may suggest itself is that of engineers

and operators. The Chinese took into their service a few experts from the Great Northern Company's employ, who are stationed principally as advisers at the chief coast cities ; and a school of telegraphy which the company had established at Foochow, in 1876, supplied a certain number of operators. But they have, with these exceptions, done the greater part of the work themselves ; and though the fact is, in a measure, to their credit, it involves an element of danger which is not confined to their telegraph plant. It is a weakness of the Chinese character to let everything fall into disrepair. They let the boilers of their steamers wear out, they let their weapons get rusty ; and it is charged that their telegraph lines are treated with similar neglect ; that rotten poles are not adequately replaced, and that batteries and electric plant are allowed to wear out. Nor is that all. It is charged that the privacy of messages is not respected, and that the operators are negligent of their office work as well as of their plant. It would doubtless be unfair to apply these charges too generally ; but the line between Tientsin and Peking is said to be the only one kept in really good condition. Nor must the fact be overlooked that a telephone has also been constructed along that route, connecting Li Hung-chang's palace with Peking in one direction and the Taku forts in the other.

The history of railways—if that which is scarcely existent can be said to have a history—is similar to that of telegraphs. About twenty years ago, certain

English merchants at Shanghai conceived the idea of constructing a little railway from that city to Woosung. It was useless trying to obtain the formal consent of the Chinese ; but it was thought that a line once made, on land duly acquired by purchase, might be tolerated, and so serve as a model for purposes of instruction. The then Taotai of Shanghai was acquainted privately with the design, and said he would offer no difficulties ; he should have vacated office before it was completed, and—*après lui le déluge*. Well, in the summer of 1876, this little pioneer line was completed and thrown open, and became at once an object of resort from all the country-side. The Chinese thronged to the station. Every train was filled, and only a minority of would-be travellers could find seats. But now began the official deluge which the late Taotai had predicted. A man, strongly suspected to be a paid suicide, as he was absolutely unknown, was run over ; and a life for a life—that of the engine-driver for that of his victim—was demanded. The thing was, of course, absurd, and it is scarcely necessary to say that proceedings went no farther than the English Magistrate's Court. Then it became known that the officials were about resorting to the familiar recipe of a mob riot : the peasantry were to be incited to tear up the rails ; and things eventually reached such a pass that Sir Thomas Wade advised a temporary stoppage of the traffic. The negotiations which resulted in the Chefoo Convention were going on ; and Li Hung-chang, who was

acting as Chinese plenipotentiary, was appealed to.

But Li Hung-chang was Viceroy of Pechihli, and had no control over the Viceroy of Nanking within whose district the line was situated. He intimated, even, that his interference would be likely to make matters worse. All that could be done was to move the Imperial Government to depute officials, to act with British officials in negotiating some terms of compromise. This was done, and the terms eventually reached were that the line should be sold to the Viceroy of Nanking, but that it should continue working at least twelve months. It was hoped that the financial success of the undertaking, and the evident appreciation of the natives, would ensure its continuance; but Shen Pao-chen—the name deserves record in story—decreed otherwise. The line was torn up at the end of the twelve months' grace, and the plant transported to Formosa, where the principal portion was to rot on the seashore.

Formosa was at that time an appanage of Fohkien, which chanced to be under the government of the very official who had been Taotai of Shanghai at the time of Mr. Reynolds' experiment in telegraphy. It is one of the insoluble puzzles one meets with in China that this man, who had—if not instigated—certainly justified, the destruction of that first telegraph, bought this railway plant with a view of utilizing it in his island dependency, where it might escape the jealousies that

beset it on the mainland. He set to work to accumulate a fund for the purpose, and had got together Tls. 500,000, when, by some turn of one of the inner wheels of the State machine, he was required to remit it for the relief of famine in the North, and his railway projects were still in abeyance when he died shortly afterwards, in office.

The next experiment was to be made on safer ground. Li Hung-chang had opened, at a place called Kaiping, in his viceroyalty of Pechihli, certain collieries under the superintendence of Mr. Kinder, an English engineer. Gradually and tentatively, Mr. Kinder supplanted carts by tramways, as a means of moving the coal; and mules by a little engine, as a means of haulage. The Viceroy and other officials were induced to visit the mines to inspect, and allowed themselves to be drawn, and the thing grew into a little railway to the river bank.

Both these experiments had, without doubt, an important educational effect. Just about that time, too, died the great Viceroy Tso Tsung-tang, who has earned for himself a name in Chinese history as the suppressor of the Mohammedan rebellion in Kansuh and Turkestan. Tso compiled, on his death-bed, and left as a legacy to the Government, a testamentary declaration in favour of railways, warships, and other foreign appliances, as an essential means of enabling China to hold her own in competition with foreigners; and his word helped, no doubt, to hasten the solution.

But the impulse which was to lead to the official acceptance of railways, as an institution, was to be supplied by the war with France. The difficulty of sending troops to Tongking convinced the Government of their value as a means of transport; and the Empress Regent issued, in 1887, an edict¹ formally approving the construction of a railway in China.

Needless, almost, to say that Li Hung-chang was the promoter of the pioneer line, which was to run between Tientsin and Taku,—to be extended in one direction subsequently towards Manchuria, and in the other to Tungchow on the way to Peking. The project was inaugurated under the guise of a company,² but was unsuccessful in attracting Chinese capital, for the simple reason that Chinese capitalists are shy of investing in enterprises which their officials pretend to control. Great Mandarins are, however, never at a loss for a few hundred thousand pounds. The first section was completed in 1888; and Li had the satisfaction of travelling by it, in October, from Tientsin to the Eastern Hills. The distance was eighty-five miles, and it had cost the moderate sum of 4250*l.* a mile. It was welcomed and utilized by the people, and prompt extensions were notoriously anticipated. But the mistake was again made of counting without the Chinese character. National misfortunes are interpreted, in China, as punishments from heaven for misgovernment by the

¹ Appendix C.

² Appendix D.

Emperor and his Mandarins ; and there occurred a variety of misfortunes which encouraged the Reactionaries to renewed obstruction. Especially, and worst of all, there happened a palace fire ! No very extensive damage was done ; but the portent was terrific ; and the Censors, who represent the essence of conservatism, pleaded it as a warning from heaven against foreign innovations. The moment was opportune too, in other respects : the Empress Regent was about to retire, the young Emperor having reached an age when he might assume personal control. Here was clearly a chance for a final effort to regain ascendancy in the Imperial councils ! And the intrigue was successful. The Emperor wavered, and the proposed extensions were stopped.

But the most powerful viceroys in the Empire, backed by the Empress Dowager and by Prince Chun, who was at once the Emperor's father and virtual Prime Minister, were not likely to submit to the dictation of a clique. The challenge was taken up, and the opinion of the great provincial officers invited. The answers were various and interesting. Among the most enlightened was one from Liu Min-chüan, who had defended Formosa against the French ; while among the recusants is said to have been the very Liu Kun-yi who has been lately made Commander-in-chief of the armies in the field. The general burden was favourable, and may be taken to have definitely settled the question of principle ; but obstruction

was again to hinder the translation of the principle into force. Various proposals were put forward. Lines from Tientsin to Peking, from Peking to Hankow, from Tungchow (near Peking) to Chinkeang, and lines northwards into Tartary, were each and all suggested. But Chang Chi-tung, who was then Governor-General of the Two Kwang—though a Progressive in his way—invented a new difficulty: railways must not, he urged, be constructed near the coast, lest they should facilitate the access of an enemy to the interior; and they must be constructed by Chinese workmen, of Chinese material, with Chinese money, in order to uphold the maxim of China for the Chinese. The first condition was fatal to Li Hung-chang's idea of extending the Tientsin railway to Peking; the second has practically stopped progress to the present day. Whether in sincerity or satire, it is difficult to say, Chang was transferred to the Viceroyalty of the Two Hu, and told to carry out a line from Hankow to Peking, in his own way. He accepted the challenge, and has constructed great works on the banks of the Yangtze, at Hanyang,¹ which appear to be, at last, so near completion that one furnace has been set experimentally to work to gratify him by a proof of efficiency. He has even made a little railway, from a place called Shih-hui-yao on the banks of the Yangtze to some hills called Tien-shan-pu, which are rich in iron ore.

¹ Appendix E.

But that marks the limit of progress of the great inland railway for the present.

The great satraps are however, as we have seen, allowed considerable latitude each in his own province ; and Li Hung-chang was able to push forward his northern line. He was allowed, like Chang Chi-tung, Tls. 2,000,000 a year for the purpose, and the rate of progress has consequently been slow. But progress has been made. The line has been completed to Shan-hai-kwan, where the Great Wall abuts on the sea, and has proved of illustrative value for the transport of troops and munitions of war during the present campaign.

A short line has also been constructed in Formosa, which may afford another illustration of the independent initiative permitted to provincial governors. We have seen that Formosa was, until lately, a dependency of Fohkien, and that Ting Jih-chang—the name deserves record alongside that of Shen Pao-chen—conceived the idea of making a railway there, so long ago as 1878. It was subsequently constituted a separate province, and placed under the government of Liu Min-chüan, who set himself to develop its natural resources. Amongst his projects was a railway to connect the two principal ports on the west coast. The usual hindrances to progress, in China, have stood in the way of this undertaking. The very system of decentralization which favoured its inception was a hindrance ; for the revenues of an island which is imperfectly organized, and imperfectly

developed, were insufficient to permit rapid construction. And the removal of Liu, who had excited antagonism by his progressive ideas and gone too fast in matters of finance, occasioned further delay. Still, the line was not stopped; and Mr. Matheson, who had it in charge, had the satisfaction of seeing a section of $19\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the capital, Taipeh, northward to Kelung, and another of $43\frac{1}{2}$ miles southward to Hsin-chu, in working order, last year, before he left. So that Formosa shares, at present, with Pechihli, the credit of possessing an operative railway.

As the dispute with Russia led to the introduction of telegraphs, and the quarrel with France to the inception of railways, so the war with Japan will probably lend a great impulse to their extension, unless Japan is allowed to exact an indemnity that will hinder progress by crippling Chinese finance. For, assuming that the authorities are awakened to the necessity of accepting foreign help—and allowing foreign engineers, at first, full control—there will remain the difficulty of means. Individual Viceroyalties may find money to construct short sections, but great trunk lines must be made either through foreign concessions, by associated Chinese capital, or by Imperial finance.

There is plenty of hoarded wealth in China which its owners would employ in railways, steamers, factories, and mines, if the officials would confine themselves to political approval. Our experience in the Malay Peninsula, where the Chinese

—unfettered by mandarin interference—are large and willing sharers in railway enterprise, is an earnest of what might be done in China if commercial enterprise were allowed free scope. It will be a hopeful presage if the need for large capital which the construction of railways must entail, should teach the officials this much-needed lesson. But it has not yet been learnt. The first trunk lines will, to all present appearance, have to be constructed by Imperial finance; and Imperial finance would probably mean, for the reasons stated, foreign loans. Twelve months ago China could have raised money for such a purpose with ease. It remains to be seen how far these conditions may be changed. Much will lie with China herself. Given evidence of sincerity—of a purpose to reform her finances and develop her communications and resources—money would, doubtless, be forthcoming to help her out of her strait.

Shortly after the edict approving railways, the Empress-Regent issued another in favour of currency reform, which expressed approval, also, of mines.¹ Mining has always been practised in China, more or less, but always by the most primitive means; and various causes have led to its abandonment in places even where it formerly prevailed. The limitations of Chinese scientific knowledge prevented operations on any extensive scale; and the authorities fearing, or professing to fear,

¹ Appendix F.

assemblages of a proverbially unruly class, were apt to prevent new enterprises on the pretence of danger to the geomantic influences. There had been, above all, a tacit exclusion of foreign machinery and engineers; and both must be admitted if the stores of almost every kind of mineral, which the country is known to contain, are to be made available as sources of national wealth. The Imperial edict was understood to imply withdrawal of these restrictions, and a willingness to permit mining, with foreign machinery, on an extensive scale. Yet progress has been retarded and enterprise dwarfed by the same hindrances that have been at work elsewhere.

The most complete information we possess, regarding the mineral resources of China, is contained in a series of letters addressed by Baron von Richtofen to the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce, at whose instance he undertook, in the years 1870-72, a series of journeys through the country, with a view to procure information on the subject. It is obviously impossible to do more, here, than mention his conclusions, which were that there is great metallic wealth of a very varied kind distributed over the Empire. Very limited efforts have, however, even yet been made to attack these latent resources.

Coal is being worked at several places in the basin of the Yangtze, though on a scale small compared to the mineral wealth of the region. There are coalfields in Formosa; and mines were

opened and successfully worked for a time by English engineers in the employ of the local Government. But official greed and jealousy got the upper hand; and the enterprise came practically to a standstill. The last Consular report stated that the mine was lying idle, and the machinery being rusted and ruined owing to neglect and to the water standing in the disused workings. Private pits working in the same neighbourhood were, on the contrary, increasing their output; and the authorities are said to be about accepting the proposal of a syndicate to work the Government mines also, paying a royalty on the produce. Coal is extensively worked in Shanse, but by native methods; and Chang Chitung's great iron-works at Hankow, which are said to be embarrassed for want of suitable fuel, could find supplies in Hunan, if Hunan conservatism would admit foreign appliances for its extraction. It is interesting, too—though perhaps in a rather academic sense—to have Richtofen's assurance that coal exists at intervals along that remarkable depression which extends through Kansuh, westwardly, into Central Asia, and through which he declares the railway must pass, that shall one day connect China with the west!

The only complete success in the way of coal mining is at the Kaiping collieries, which were opened under the auspices of Li Hung-chang—and, as we have seen, under capable foreign supervision—in the north. These are said to be now turn-

ing out 2000 tons a day; and the quantity could undoubtedly be increased, if it were desired, by increasing the machinery and staff.

The mineral wealth of Yunnan has been a stock subject whenever commerce with China has been mentioned, and there can be no doubt that that province has, for centuries, supplied copper to the whole empire. Work was practically stopped during the Mahomedan Rebellion, but has been resumed with some measure of success. Yunnan tin finds its way, as we shall presently see, down the Red River to Tongking; and frequent mention is made, in the *Peking Gazette*, of consignments of copper from Yunnan to Peking, where it is wanted for coinage into *cash*. The aid of Japanese engineers was invoked some years ago, as a sort of compromise, presumably, on the point of foreign supervision; but their services have, I believe, been long since dispensed with, and the work placed under native control. Copper has been discovered in Hainan. Dr. Williamson's interesting pages teem with allusions to mineral wealth, and not infrequently to native mines, perceived during his "Journeys in North China." Considerable quantities of machinery were ordered, some time ago, for the purpose of iron-mining in Kwei-chow; but the Governor trusted to native supervision, with the result that his machinery was ill-treated and misapplied, and the project failed of success. The same neglect which leaves boilers to wear out, and water-tight compartments to rust

in their grooves, is apt to bring mining machinery to grief, when Chinese conceit excludes foreign control.

Gold is found in many parts. Though technically forbidden, gold-washing has been carried on surreptitiously, for centuries, amid the hills of Tartary. Gold is found also in Szechuen. Gold-washing has been lately carried on with considerable success in Formosa. Attempts at gold-mining by foreign machinery have been made in Shantung, but without, I believe, appreciable results. Mongolia is said to abound in metallic wealth. Silver is being worked near Zehol, under the superintendence of an American engineer, who is said to have verified the presence of both iron and coal in the same neighbourhood. There are rich goldfields on the Chinese bank of the Amoor, which are being developed under Government auspices. Machinery has been transported overland at great cost and trouble for these purposes, and reports indicate from time to time that certain results are being attained. China has figured lately as an appreciable exporter of gold, which is understood to be drawn from these northern regions, including districts so remote as Corea and Thibet.

The blot on the picture is that this enterprise has been official in its inception, and that it has been hampered, therefore, by the conditions which stunt every enterprise that the Mandarins undertake. Private enterprise, on the other hand, is discouraged not only by official meddling and jealousy,

but by the frequently unsatisfactory results that have attended mining experiments in China as well as elsewhere in the world. Mining is generally a gamble, and the risk is proportionately greater where the inexperience is supreme. That the Chinese are alive to the possibilities involved, may be inferred from statements made in a recent letter from Shanghai, as to ores sent in from different parts of China, with a view to ascertain their marketable value. There were, the writer affirms, "samples of copper ore and other mineral ores from Hupei, galena from Hunan, galena and cinnabar from Kweichow, copper and tin ores from Yunnan, gold, silver and iron ores from Shantung, and silver, copper, and iron ores from Szechuen; all requiring to be assayed and reported upon with a view of ascertaining whether it would be profitable to work the mines whence the samples were derived." But in mining, as in many other respects, foreign experts will have to be admitted, and foreign enterprise encouraged, if the great mineral resources of the country are to be made available. Chinese would take shares freely in a mine that was to be worked under foreign management, by a company whose funds were felt to be exempt from official peculation, and whose staff would not necessarily be swamped by the family connections of the promoting clique. But they are shy of investing in mines, as they were shy of investing in a railway, which they know to be under official control.

It may not be uninteresting to note, as another mark of progress in its way, a tendency to colonize and develop the outlying dependencies of the Empire. The Marquis Tseng pointed out, in an article written about the time of his departure from England, that China had within the limits of her own empire vast unoccupied tracts awaiting the enterprise of her surplus population; and the remark finds illustration in what is actually taking place. A memorial from the Governor-General of Turkestan in the *Peking Gazette* of the 18th April, 1887, shows that a really statesmanlike scheme¹ had been devised for the colonization of that great dependency, which was suffering, doubtless, from the ruinous effects of the late civil war. A great emigration has been going on for years to Manchuria, where myriads of acres of fertile land awaited, and await, the hoe of an agricultural and industrious people. Chinese immigrants have, in fact, already made that region a granary for the provinces of Chihli and Shantung. And organization was following colonization till the Japanese invasion came to put back the clock. Shingking had been divided into administrative and prefectural districts, on the model of China proper; brigandage was being combated, and regular government and taxation substituted for the irregular system which

¹ Every immigrating family was to be given sixty *mow* (about ten acres) of land, and implements, seed, and food to the value of about Tls. 72. The amount to be repaid by instalments in the second and third years, and taxation to begin in the fourth.

had suited the habits of a less settled population. So great, in fact, has been the migration that the Chinese have swamped the Manchu element in the population, and seem in a fair way to obliterate even their language.

Much has been done, also, to establish organized government in Formosa, the eastern portion of which was, twenty years ago, in the hands of the aborigines, while the western half had been colonized, but was imperfectly governed as an outlying appanage of Fohkien. The sulphur, sugar, camphor and tea, which are among the products of this great island, render the success of the enterprise commercially as well as politically interesting. There have been tentative but ill-sustained efforts also to deal with Hainan, where the aborigines have been periodically harried, for generations, without any sustained effort to extend civilization beyond the seaboard.

CHAPTER VI.

INDUSTRIES AND RESOURCES.

It is time to turn now from these modern developments to the products by which China was known to the world before she had been disturbed in her political isolation. Two hundred and thirty years have passed since Samuel Pepys ordered his first cup of tea—"a China drink of which he had never drunk before." The experiment was contemporary with the first introduction of the leaf, for it was about that time that the Dutch brought it to European notice, and it was in 1667 that the East India Company gave a first order to their agent at Bantam to send home an experimental 100 lbs. of the best tea he could procure. This 100 lbs. had grown, two centuries later, to 75,000,000 lbs., and during all those years China had retained an unique position as the only tea-exporting country of the world. But English energy and enterprise had, in the meantime, created the tea gardens of Assam; and in 1867 and the two following years India was able to send seven, eight, and ten million lbs. to the London market. It was not till twenty years later that Ceylon began

to assert itself as a considerable rival. Yet the import of tea into Great Britain from India and Ceylon exceeded that from China, last year, by nearly 132,000,000 lbs.

The following figures will best illustrate the startling revolution that has been effected :—

	1886-7	1887-8	1888-9	1893-4
Ceylon tea has risen from	8	to 14 $\frac{3}{4}$	26	and 72 million lbs.
India „ „	78	„ 86	95	„ 114 „
China „ has fallen from	139	„ 117	98	„ 54 „

so that, instead of possessing a monopoly, China contributes now less than a quarter of the 240,000,000 lbs. of tea required by the people of these islands.

The case of Australia is scarcely less remarkable ; for whereas she imported, four years ago, 21,000,000 lbs. of China tea, she took last year only 12,000,000. Her requirements have risen in the meantime to 24,000,000 lbs., but the balance is drawn from India and Ceylon.

The United States import a large quantity of tea, but of a different quality from that preferred in England. The American taste runs on a kind known as Oolong, which is produced mainly in the South of China and Formosa ; and Japan is rivalling, here, the career of India as a competitor in Europe. Twenty years ago the export of green tea from China to the United States reached nearly 30,000,000 lbs. ; but it had fallen last year to 15,000,000 lbs. ; while the export from Japan had

risen from 15,000,000 lbs., at which it stood fifteen years ago, to 46,000,000 lbs.

New Zealand, Canada, South Africa, the Straits Settlements, and even India, all take their millions. It deserves to be noted, indeed, as a curious fact, that 4,000,000 lbs. of China tea found their way last year, through Bombay, to Persia and Afghanistan, which would seem natural markets for the Indian product. But the greatest of all purchasers is Russia. The Russian demand seemed, for a time, to grow as fast as that from England declined, and constitutes a total which is hardly suspected even by many who are interested in the trade. But this also has now begun to slacken. The direct export from China to Russia which amounted, (including brick tea), to 122,000,000 lbs. in 1887, fell last year to 98,000,000 lbs. 22,000,000 lbs. went to Odessa; 59,000,000 lbs. to Tientsin, and 10,000,000 lbs. to the Russian ports on the Pacific, to be carried thence overland by camels through Siberia; while 6,000,000 lbs. were sent from Hankow up the Han River to a place called Fan-chêng, whence it is carried overland through Shanse to Kiachta.

Altogether, the total export of tea from China to all quarters is given by the Customs as:—

1884.	1886.	1888.	1889.	1891.	1893.
peculs.	peculs.	peculs.	peculs.	peculs.	peculs. ¹
2,016,000	2,217,000	2,167,000	1,877,000	1,750,000	1,820,000

¹ A pecul=133½ lbs. There is, besides, the export of brick tea to Thibet and Chinese Tartary. Mr. Baber estimates the former at 10,000,000 lbs.

The Russian demand continues vigorous for reasons, among others, connected with the preparation of the leaf. It is obvious that, in order to travel great distances by imperfect means of transport, the leaf must be so prepared as to keep good and fresh longer than in the case of tea which passes quickly into consumption. And the longer fermentation and higher firing of China tea give it this necessary advantage. The Russian taste, besides, runs on China tea, the best qualities of which command, for the Russian market, a price out of all proportion to that which inferior qualities command in London. So that, although ousted from her monopoly, China has still a great market for her produce. But it does not follow that she will retain it, unless she rouse herself to grapple with the emergency. India and Ceylon by no means admit that they cannot produce tea to suit the Russian as well as the English market. They have already succeeded, as we have seen, in displacing 9,000,000 lbs. of the Australian demand; and Russia took, last year, a tentative 3,000,000 lbs. of Ceylon leaf.

It is difficult to fix on a representative figure, to show the relative cost of a product in which there are so many varying grades. An average of 6½d. to 7d. free on board ship in India and Ceylon, and 6½d. free on board ship in China, may be taken as approximately correct; but whereas the production and export in India and Ceylon are absolutely free, taxation of all kinds in China is estimated at 1½d. a lb. Part of this taxation is

raised inland, and part is export duty levied by the Imperial Customs. Now the Treaty of Tientsin fixed the duty on tea as well as other products at five per cent. *ad valorem*; but it was agreed, for convenience' sake, to transmute the percentage into a fixed rate of Tls. $2\frac{1}{2}$ per pecul ($133\frac{1}{3}$ lbs.). So that the standard of value taken must have been Tls. 50, which was extravagantly high, even thirty years ago, and is ludicrous at the present day. Tls. 18 would now be nearer the mark. Yet the old rate is maintained; so that the Chinese Government taxes a falling trade nearly 300 per cent. higher than the proper tariff, besides permitting the levy of provincial duties which bring up the total burden to about 30 per cent. on the prime cost.

The remedies indicated are to lighten taxation and improve the cultivation and manufacture. For not only are India and Ceylon free from taxation, but the plants are cultivated with scientific care, and their leaf is prepared by means which exclude defects that are often present in the Chinese product. Japan has appreciated the position, and is reaping her reward. Why cannot China follow suit? When we began tea-making in Assam, we imported Chinese labour. Would not any ordinary people follow the example and get machinery and experts from India to teach them, in turn, now India has improved upon the lessons of her teachers? The Chinese Government has not, to do it justice, been altogether blind to the emergency. It has gone so far as to show an

interest in the cultivation; and it has been supplied, through Sir Robert Hart's instrumentality, with an immense volume of information, including particulars of Indian methods. But the growers are slow to move; and a lightening of taxation would seem an essential preliminary to any real improvement. So long as China possessed a monopoly of supply, the addition of a penny or twopence a pound to the price was immaterial; but it is presuming too much to suppose that the Chinese grower can compete, under a thirty per cent. handicap, with his untaxed rivals. The relative incidence of the burden has, it is true, been reduced by the inflation of the rupee; but even the fifteen per cent. bonus of which India has thus made him a present, fails to redress the balance.—Anxiety to stimulate exports was one of the reasons put forward, by the Viceroy of Canton, for advising the construction of railways. He would do as much, probably, to further that object if he would bring about their relief from the taxation to which they are now subject.

For centuries, however, before the very existence of such a beverage as tea was suspected, in Europe, the Chinese were renowned for their production of silk; and for a longer period than in the case of tea they enjoyed a monopoly of the privilege. Along that great natural highway which Richtofen has indicated for the eventual railroad between China and the West, the silks of China found their way,

across Central Asia and Persia, to Syria and Rome. They appear first in the Imperial city just before the dawn of our era, and sell for their weight in gold. Nor was it till 200 years later that Justinian induced some Persian monks to bring away a few silk-worm eggs and introduce the industry in the neighbourhood of Constantinople. How widely it has since spread may be inferred from the fact that China supplies, now, barely a third of the world's demand. It is not that there has been any diminution in her yield, but that other countries are forging ahead; and, as in the case of tea, an article intrinsically good comes into competition with a foreign product not better in quality but more skilfully and cheaply prepared. The trouble has been in the rough and irregular reeling from Chinese cocoons. Adhering to their primitive methods, the Chinese produce a comparatively uneven, knotted thread which has difficulty in competing with the machine-reeled silks of Europe and Japan.

A product so delicate is liable to great variations. Wet or fine weather at a critical period of the worms' existence will make all the difference between a large and inferior crop. Thus, the export of White silk from China was :

	in 1892.	1893.
	60,000 pecula.	54,400 pecula.
and from Japan	54,000 „	37,000 „

while the relative prices may be taken as :

Milan.	Japan.	China re-reels.	China Filatures.
37 francs.	36.70	29	39

The figures prove at once the excellence of the Chinese product and the weight of the handicap to which it is subjected by the conservatism of the grower. For the difference between 29 and 39 francs is simply a question of machine *versus* hand reeling—from a cocoon that has been killed, instead of from one that is alive. The pure whiteness of the China silk places it, in the first case, ahead of all competitors; whereas the trouble and cost of re-reeling uneven thread leave it, in the second, at such a discount that European manufacturers will hardly buy the commoner kinds unless compelled by scarcity of supplies.

The Cantonese, who are the most enterprising class in China, rose first to the emergency, and have adopted European machinery with a considerable measure of success. Filatures worked by steam have been erected in the heart of the silk-producing districts of Kwangtung. But the bulk of China silk is produced in Kiangsu and Chekeang, and the growers in those provinces decline to emulate the example. They reject machinery, and they object to killing the cocoon. It is ungrateful, they say, to kill an insect which yields such beautiful material. The feeling is not impervious to pecuniary considerations, and may yield, in time, before the practical illustration of difference in price; but it exists, and is one of the causes of the bad reeling of Chinese silk.

To meet the difficulty, certain foreign merchants in Shanghai, which is the commercial centre of the

silk-producing districts, proposed to do their own reeling. They established filatures in Shanghai, trusting to buy cocoons up country and reel them on the spot. They were handicapped, at first, by difficulty in getting cocoons. The right of buying these in the interior was specially conceded, by the local mandarins, to certain Chinamen who paid, presumably, certain "squeezes" for the privilege, and who could not or would not produce more than a very limited quantity. Gradually, however, these obstacles have been overcome. The difficulties put in the way of procuring cocoons have practically disappeared; the objection to killing the chrysalis has been allayed; and Chinese capitalists have followed the foreign example. There are now, in Shanghai, several steam filatures owned by Chinese; and this machine-reeled silk commands, as we have seen, an excellent price in the American and European markets.

Still, not more than ten per cent. of the whole Chinese crop is yet machine-reeled; and if it appear to us inconceivable that an essentially commercial people should continue to place itself—in the case of both Tea and Silk—at a wilful disadvantage with its neighbours, we can only reflect that the Chinese are, in this as in other respects, peculiar. It is not unlikely that they might have been driven, ere this, to follow the example of Japan, but for the differences of currency which enable them to obtain the same amount of silver, for their silk, at a steadily decreasing cost in gold

to the foreign purchaser ; thus transferring the strain of competition in a great measure to European shoulders. For the Italian is handicapped as against Chinese and Japanese silk, very much as the English farmer is handicapped as against Indian wheat. Even this advantage, however, has its limits. The growing tendency to neglect hand-reeled Chinese silk will compel the growers to adopt European methods ; and the success of the Shanghai filatures may be taken as an earnest of better things.

What has been written, so far, refers to the White silk of ordinary commerce. But China has other resources. She exported, last year, 12,000 bales of a Yellow silk which is produced chiefly in Szechuen and Shantung, and which goes, it is curious to note, largely to Spain, to be used in saddle trappings and trimmings. Then there is obtained, in the provinces of Shingking (Manchuria) and Shantung, from a worm that feeds on leaves other than mulberry, a coarse brownish silk which the peasants weave in their own houses, by hand-loom, into a material known as *pongee* that can be sold here at prices—6s. to 10s. per piece of 20 yards—with which nothing else can compete. The export of this so-called Wild silk reached, last year, nearly 14,000 bales. Machinery has also been invented for preparing waste silk in a way to make it available for commerce ; and this also has come to form an appreciable feature in the list of exports.

If it were possible to obtain statistics of the pro-

duction of opium in China, it would probably be found to rank not far, if at all, below tea or silk in annual value. Such statistics are not, however, yet forthcoming. All we know is that the production is enormous, and is increasing ; the out-turn in the one province of Szechuen alone being estimated at 150,000 peculs, or about double the whole import from India ; while Yunnan is believed to be not far behind her neighbour. None other of the eighteen provinces can rival these figures ; but in every one, and even in Manchuria, the poppy is grown on a greater or less scale. Indian opium holds towards the native crop very much the same position that the first-class vintages hold towards the total yield of wine, in France—that of a restricted and expensive luxury ; and an endeavour to dissuade France from exporting Chateau Latour, with a view to extinguish drinking in England, would be about as effective as the agitation of the Anti-Opium League against the export of Indian opium to China. The process of automatic reduction promises, indeed, to be sufficiently rapid without political aid. The last Consular report from Hankow says :—

“The import has been steadily declining for some years, and sooner or later its use will be given up altogether except by the wealthier classes, and its place taken entirely by native drug. The poppy is daily planted more freely, and the cultivation is encouraged rather than otherwise by the native authorities. Szechuen opium compares very favourably with Indian as to price, and is said to be steadily improving in quality. This opium and that produced in Hupeh are most in demand in this district. The Hupeh drug is considerably cheaper than that from Szechuen, but

the production is small. Somewhere about 80 per cent. of the entire amount consumed in this immediate neighbourhood is native drug, and as the place is thickly populated and the population of smokers, according to Chinese estimates, is 60 per cent. of the adult male population, the total amount must be considerable."

And what is true of the district around Hankow is approximately true of other portions of the Empire.

Setting aside opium, cotton may be taken to rank next, both in interest and importance, as a commercial product. Any attempt to estimate the cotton crop of China would be worse than futile. It can only be said that, like that of opium, it is enormous. The 77,000,000 lbs., valued at H. Tls. 6,000,000, which were exported last year, was a fractional portion of the total. All the millions of China wear cotton clothes. These clothes are padded with cotton in winter. The quilts under which they sleep are padded with cotton. And these considerations must be kept in sight with regard, also, to other products. Every well-to-do Chinaman in the empire possesses a silk coat; every man, woman, and child almost, drinks tea, so that the export represents, in each case, but a fraction of the production. Cotton is cultivated especially in the plain which forms the valley of the Yangtze, and is exported thence westward into Szechuen, and coastwise, through Shanghai and Ningpo, to other provinces of China. Except during the American civil war, when the world was scraped to supply the mills of Lancashire, China has not been in the habit of sending

cotton abroad. She could not compete with America or Egypt either in quality or relative price. But the great fall of exchange since the close of the Indian Mints has enabled Chinese cotton to be laid down again, during the past year, on the Liverpool market; and the extension of manufacturing industry in Japan has created a new demand.

It is less as an export, however, than as an article of manufacture, that Chinese cotton claims our interest at the present juncture. The recent extension of the manufacturing industry in Japan is a matter of common knowledge. Japanese mill-owners have been purchasing, yearly, more and more Chinese cotton, which they are beginning to re-export in the shape of yarn and cloth, in proportion as they overtake the home demand. But China possesses equal advantages. She has abundance of cheap labour, and there seems no reason why she should not emulate her neighbour.

Two years ago there were, I believe, only three cotton factories in China. One was still in course of erection at Wuchang. One was a yarn-mill of 15,000 spindles which some Japanese had managed, —with official connivance, it is understood, of the kind usually associated in China with official interests—to set up, a few years previously, at Shanghai; and a Chinese syndicate under the patronage of Li Hung-chang had just completed a cotton mill of 25,000 spindles and 550 looms,

when the close of the Indian mints and the repeal of the Sherman Act came to revolutionize the situation.

Li had projected this mill so far back as 1878, but the project dragged for years. Land had been bought and fenced in, foundations laid, wharves commenced; but there the matter hung. The machinery, procured from the United States, had been lying for years in the sheds; and an American engineer had been waiting under engagement to set it up. Where the hitch was, I am unable to say; probably the money first allotted had melted away, and there was no sufficient inducement to put in more. With brightening prospects, however, interest revived. The scheme was taken up again in earnest, in 1887, pushed to completion, and proved a success. The cloth and yarn turned out were commanding a ready sale, at remunerative rates, when, in the autumn of 1893, the entire building was accidentally burned down. But it had been in existence long enough to prove its efficiency. New machinery for 100,000 spindles and 1500 looms was ordered from England, without delay; and the work of erection—instead of dragging, as in the first instance, for twelve years—was completed in twelve months.

The difference is due to the change in the situation which has been brought about by the divergence between silver and gold. Up to 1893, the Lancashire manufacturer had contrived to meet the changed conditions by reducing the gold price of his goods *pari passu* with the fall of

silver in exchange value, so that the Chinaman was able to buy his cloth at approximately the same silver price. But the close of the Indian Mints completely changed the aspect of affairs. The exchange value of the tael, which on the 1st January, 1893, had been 3s. 9d., stood on the 1st January, 1894, at 3s. 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ d., and on the 1st January, 1895, at 2s. 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. The silver price of English goods had to be raised, in order to procure an adequate gold return; and the difference represents so much clear advantage to the Chinese, over the English, manufacturer. What had previously been done apathetically, and under comparatively slight inducement, assumed the form, suddenly, of lucrative enterprise.

It is a notable feature of recent currency changes that their effects have recoiled entirely on the west. Gold has continuously risen, and produce has fallen correspondingly in gold value. A quarter of wheat which sold, in England, twenty years ago for 50s., is now worth less than half the price; a piece of shirting which cost 10s., twenty years ago, in Manchester, is now invoiced at 6s.; but a bale of silk which was worth Tls. 390 in China twenty years ago, is worth Tls. 390 still. That is to say, the Chinaman's tael or ounce of silver is, to him, of practically undiminished purchasing power;¹ and instead of

¹ Mr. Wetmore's tables show that there has been a slight fall in the purchasing power of silver since the close of the Indian mints, though it is still higher than in 1873. Taking

giving the extra silver which the Manchester manufacturer requires, in order to recoup his (gold) cost, he contemplates setting up factories himself. The luxurious demand for foreign goods may be comparatively unchecked, because Chinese cotton is not suitable for manufacturing the finer kinds of cloth; but it is perfectly adapted for making the rougher fabrics which suit the popular taste; and manufacture in China is, of course, bonussed, just as English and Indian industry is handicapped,' by every step in the appreciation of gold or of the rupee.

The first Shanghai mill had been designed rather in a spirit of rivalry than under the impulse of prospective gain; and the founders, claiming to work under a special license from the Government which gave them a monopoly for a term of years, endeavoured, at first, to keep out all competitors. But even Chinese can open their minds upon occasion, and the close of the Indian mints produced the cataclysm. The monopoly has been given up; and the right of manufacture declared free, on condition that whoso erects mills shall pay the owners of the Pioneer venture a royalty of Tl. 1 per bale of yarn produced, in order to recoup them for the loss sustained by the fire! The 2000 as the par value, in that year, of twenty articles of Chinese produce, the index figure, which had fallen to 1760 in 1892, had recovered to 1920 in 1893.

¹ The import of shirtings declined by more than 2,500,000 pieces, and of T. cloths by 550,000 pieces in 1893. The import of Japanese cotton goods, on the other hand, rose by 40,000 pieces.

arrangement is characteristic and ingenious, but is too consonant with Chinese ideas to excite opposition, and too slight to operate as a deterrent—if investors are left otherwise free. There was some natural distrust at first, as to whether this would really be the case; but confidence appears to have been somehow imparted; and there is an apparent readiness to embark in the new industry on an extensive scale. Two new mills have been already constructed at Shanghai, so that there are now four in full operation. A native organization, styled the Chinese cotton cloth and yarn Administration, is understood to have arranged for the further erection, there and at Ningpo, of 1500 looms; and correspondents on the spot anticipate rapid development of the industry.

Nor is the movement confined to a single district. The Viceroy Chang Chi-tung, whom we have seen constructing great smelting works in Central China, for the manufacture of steel rails, had ordered, when at Canton, machinery for a cotton mill of 1000 looms. We have seen, also, that the circumstances under which he was removed indicated certain differences of opinion in regard to the construction of railways; and it is perhaps a little significant that his successor, Li Han-chang, who is a brother of the great Northern viceroy, declined to take over the venture. Obligated, thus, to take it with him, Chang set up the machinery in his new capital, Wuchang, where it has proved a success. The mill was opened in

April, 1893; and has since been working night and day. The cloth and yarn turned out are met by eager demand, and machinery for two new mills, aggregating 90,000 spindles, has already been ordered.

The Yangtze valley will be the chief seat of cotton manufacture, for the reason that it is the chief centre of production. But cotton is grown in other districts, and "indications are not wanting"—to quote the report of the Statistical Secretary to the Imperial Chinese Customs—"that the erection of cotton mills at ports extending from the Gulf of Tongking to Chungking is contemplated."

The example of Japan, where cotton mills have been working at a handsome profit, makes it probable that they will be fully successful also in China; for Japan is at the comparative disadvantage of having to import the cotton which China can grow, herself, in practically unlimited quantity. Yet, while the mill-owners of Lancashire are complaining that the handicap is greater than they can bear, mills in Japan have been working the fullest time, and new machinery of varied character is being rapidly set up. The cotton mills of Kobe are paying dividends of 16 per cent., while those of Oldham are showing adverse balances.¹ The cotton industry of Japan is, in fact, advancing by leaps and bounds, and the purpose is evidently entertained of com-

¹ Appendix F.

peting with Manchester in the production of the finest qualities of yarn. She was already, before the war, exporting cloth and yarn to China; and the possible expansion of that trade appears to be limited only by the possible extension of manufacturing industry in China.

These indications of a tendency among the silver-using countries of the Far East to supply themselves, by working up their own cotton, lend additional weight to the representations of those who urge that the financial troubles which have lately weighed upon India are due to the recent ostracism of silver in the West; and that the attempt to impart a scarcity value to the rupee is to set up, between India and the farther East, the very barrier which is embarrassing her financial relations with the West. The great trade in Bombay yarn grew up on a silver level, and the Indian is obviously handicapped against the Japanese product, in exact proportion as that level has been disturbed.

What will be the consequence if China set herself to produce yarn and cloth, by foreign machinery, from her own cotton, on her own soil, the future will disclose. Japanese goods have already made their appearance in Singapore; and a slight farther fall of exchange might permit cloth manufactured in the East to be laid down at a profit in the West. The possible significance of such a change may be inferred from the fact that cotton goods represented, last year, nearly

one-third of China's foreign imports, aggregating a value of Tls. 45,000,000—equal, at the then average rate of exchange, to about 9,000,000*l*.

If I stay here, in an enumeration of China's natural products, it is simply because an exhaustive review might become as tiresome as an attempt to estimate their value would be futile. Taken in conjunction with the immensity of the empire, the immensity of its resources may serve perhaps to explain much that would otherwise be obscure in its comparative indifference to foreign trade; for the eighteen provinces that constitute what is commonly known as China proper are equal to nearly all Europe, excluding Russia, in extent; and just as there seems hardly a mineral they do not contain, so there is hardly a product apparently that is not grown in some portion of the Empire.

The population of China was commonly taken, some years ago, at 400,000,000. But that is now considered to have been an over-estimate. The numbers were, moreover, greatly reduced during the progress of the Taeping, Mahomedan, and Nienfei rebellions, which convulsed the country for a generation after its opening to foreign trade in 1842. As a result of recent inquiries and estimates, it is believed that the eighteen provinces of China proper contain from 250,000,000 to 300,000,000. These people are, admittedly, the most frugal, industrious, and perhaps the most commerce-loving in the world. The integrity of their merchants has been vouched

for by all who have had dealings with them ; and it is a significant testimony to their trustworthiness in other respects, that foreign merchants in Japan were appalled at the prospect that their Chinese employés might be compelled to leave during the present war.

The climate and products vary, of course, greatly between the extreme limits of this great territory ; and that very variety, by leading to an interchange of commodities between the several provinces, has given rise to a great inland commerce. This, again, has led to the evolution of a banking system which represents almost every phase of the business. And though the smaller institutions not infrequently come to grief in bad times, large failures are comparatively rare. The famous Shense bankers, especially, are proverbial for honour and wealth and for extensive ramifications which facilitate remittances and business transactions throughout the empire.

Previous to 1842, foreign intercourse was restricted to Canton. The treaty negotiated in that year by Sir Henry Pottinger opened five ports to foreign trade. The number was increased to fifteen by the treaties of 1858-60, and five others have been since added. Without going further back, it may be interesting to note that the total value of foreign trade, as shown by the Customs returns, has increased during the last twelve years from H. Tls. 163,363,000 to close on H. Tls. 268,000,000.

	Imports.	Exports.	Total.
1881 .	91,910,877	74,452,974	163,363,851
1893 .	151,362,819	116,632,811	267,995,180

The exchange value of the Haekwan¹ tael averaged, in 1893, 3*s.* 11½*d.*; twenty years ago it was 6*s.* 8*d.*; it is at present about 3*s.* 0½*d.* Any attempt to translate the above figures into sterling would, therefore, be misleading, as the progressive appreciation of gold during the period under review has necessitated a continual augmentation in the volume of merchandise, to produce the same sterling results. The trade would, in fact, if expressed in gold, be made to appear nearly stagnant, instead of exhibiting the considerable increase to which the statistics bear witness.

The entries and clearances of shipping at the treaty ports during 1893 amounted to 29,318,811 tons, of which 19,203,978 tons were under the British flag. These figures are more valuable as indicating volume of movement than the number of ships employed, as the regular coast and river steamers enter and clear many times in the course of the year. The total revenue collected by the Imperial Maritime Customs amounted, last year, to H. Tls. 21,989,300. But that fails to represent the full Customs revenue of the empire, because there exists also a native Customs establishment which

¹ It may be well to explain, here, that 100 so-called Haekwan taels (in which the Customs accounts are kept) are worth 111.40 so-called Shanghai taels (the tael of commerce).

collects from Chinese junks a considerable, though much smaller, amount.

The introduction of steam on the coast and on the great arterial river of Central China has, of course, aided very materially in the development of trade. But no advance has been made, in other respects, upon native methods. Failing railways, China depends for internal carriage mainly on the waterways, natural and artificial, with which she is richly supplied. The rivers best known to us in Europe are the Yangtze, which traverses the whole width of the empire from Szechuen to the Yellow Sea; the Se-kiang, or West River, which drains the southern provinces towards Canton, and the famous Yellow River, whose characteristics and terrific outbreaks will be discussed in a subsequent chapter. But there are other considerable rivers draining the several provinces towards their principal ports, besides numerous minor streams and canals which serve as distributing channels of commerce and fulfill, practically, the function performed by roads in England.

The chief of the artificial waterways is, of course, the Grand Canal, which was designed to connect Peking with the Yangtze Valley, and facilitate the transport of rice to the north. A large proportion of this tribute rice is, as we have seen, now carried to Tientsin by steam; but a considerable quantity still goes through the canal, in fleets of grain junks whose progress is reported, in the *Peking Gazette*, with a precision that indicates their

traditional importance. Their movements are, however, slow and often difficult, owing to the deterioration which occurred during the Taeping rebellion, and which has never been adequately repaired. It has been suggested that an outlay of 1,000,000*l.* would be needed to completely restore this great waterway, which might then again become an important channel of inland communication and trade.

The only one of these great watercourses open to foreign trade is the Yangtze, which was opened to Hankow by Lord Elgin's Treaty of 1858. It was opened 400 miles further, to Ichang, by Sir Thomas Wade's Convention of 1876; and, finally, to Chungking, in the heart of Szechuen, by a convention negotiated by Mr. O'Connor, in 1893. The Imperial Government has been often approached, with a view to induce it to open other rivers to foreign commerce. The Hongkong Chamber of Commerce has, for example, frequently represented the advantages that would ensue from the employment of steam on the great river which places Canton in communication with Kwangse and Yunnan. But there is, in China, the same idea which prevailed in England with reference to railways, that steam would throw out of employment great numbers who find work in connection with existing means of transport. There are objections also on the part of the local authorities, and still more on the part of official underlings, who batten on the inland taxation which foreign merchants

desire to systematize and reduce. So that these incomparable waterways, though utilized to the utmost capacity of sails and oars, are still closed to modern navigation. Occasion will be taken, in a subsequent chapter, to examine the question of inland navigation, in connection with the project of opening the West River to foreign trade. But it can scarcely be superfluous, in the meantime, to note the great development of commercial activity that may be anticipated when the inevitable decision is taken, to open up these natural highways to steam.

CHAPTER VII.

CURRENCY.

ANOTHER example of the curious "limitations" of the Chinese is afforded by their currency. Fancy the utter crudity of a monetary system which depends on copper coins worth about one-sixth of a farthing, for common use, and on so-called "shoes" of *sycee*—blocks of silver hollowed in the centre—weighing about 4 lbs., and worth about 8*l.*, for adjusting accounts. Yet they seem to have tried, in the course of their history, almost every currency device that human ingenuity could suggest, from paper to gold, and from deer skins to silver, with intermediary experiments in cloth, iron, and various kinds of amalgam. Some of the earliest Chinese records speak of digging metals for purposes of money. The famous Emperor Che Hwangte made gold coins of 1 lb. weight, more than 300 years before Christ; but they disappeared, together with the dynasty he had founded, in the next generation. The Emperor Wuti (140 B.C.) made coins of mixed tin and silver, which were given a nominal value beyond their intrinsic worth, and experienced the vicissitudes which such experiments usually entail.

Learning wisdom by adversity, Wuti next established a State mint, under the direction of three officials of the Academy of Science, who seem to have really tried to establish a sound Imperial coinage; but counterfeiters multiplied, notwithstanding the severity of the punishments inflicted, and caused so much confusion that one statesman deliberately proposed, in the following century, to abolish metallic money altogether, and revert to the use of grain and cloth as media of exchange.

The Chinese had already passed, more than once, through all the misery arising from an over-issued and depreciated paper currency, centuries before it was hailed, in Europe, as the invention of the philosopher's stone.¹ Without going further back, paper money flourished exceedingly under the Emperors of the Sung dynasty, who were contemporary with our late Saxon and early Norman kings. Undeterred by their inevitable experience, the Mongols thought they had again discovered a fountain of wealth; and nothing that Marco Polo saw in Cambalu impressed him more than the facility with which the Great Khan accumulated gold, silver, and jewels in exchange for paper money which, in turn, passed freely current throughout his dominions. Retribution, in the shape of collapse and attendant misery, is said to have had much to do with the overthrow of the Mongol dynasty (A.D. 1368) by the Ming. Yet we find paper money again under the

¹ See a compendious and interesting work on "Chinese Currency." By W. Vissering, LL.D., Leyden.

Ming, with the very imprinted warning which was found desirable in the case of American greenbacks, that "to counterfeit is death."¹

Paper apart, Chinese currency troubles seem to have arisen mainly from two causes—inefficient minting and false coining. They never got beyond the idea of casting, so that their coins lacked the protection afforded by artistic production; and counterfeiters and sweaters appear to have thriven from the beginning. Nor—worshippers of the past though they may be in other respects—do they seem to have been ever quite satisfied with the experience of their ancestors in regard to intrinsic value. They have used gold, silver, and copper, alternately and altogether. They have mixed, as we have seen, tin and silver; and if they have never, like Lycurgus, abolished gold and silver altogether in favour of iron, they have supplemented copper by iron with the same result of accumulating great stocks of comparatively valueless metal. Yet, after all these experiments, they are still under the dominion of copper coins, 1000 of which ought to be worth a silver tael, but which are so frequently debased by admixture of iron and sand that the proportion is far from holding good in current exchange. They have developed a complete and, on the whole, sound banking system; but of

¹ The legend ran textually: "Whoever fabricates or uses forged bills shall be beheaded, and he who informs against the forger, or arrests him, shall receive a reward of Tls. 250 of silver." *Vide* "Chinese Currency," *ut supra*.

coined money, in the European sense of the word, they have practically none.

Five-and-thirty years ago, Sherard Osborn¹ gave utterance to a complaint that China had absorbed and hoarded all the great silver currency which the mines of Mexico and Peru had disseminated over the world, in return for her much-needed products. It was at the time when Australia and California were pouring their newly-found gold into Europe; the ratio of production of the precious metals had fallen from 46 to 8 to 1, and the East was eagerly absorbing the silver which the abundant gold was tending to displace. Sherard Osborn's assertion was, at any rate, so far true that the world was being scraped for Spanish Carolus dollars to send into China to buy silk. After the supply of these had been exhausted, Mexican dollars came into use for similar purposes, and to supplement the need for a currency in the districts around the treaty ports where foreign influences had reached. But the greater part of these coins have long since disappeared. All the Carolus dollars that could be recovered have gone back to Spain, where their currency value became so much enhanced, relatively, as the exchange value of silver fell, that it became profitable to purchase them, even at a premium, for re-shipment home. Millions of Mexican dollars have taken their place. Many of these, even, were re-exported to India,—so long as the mints

¹ "The Past and Future of British Relations in China." By Captain Sherard Osborn, R.N., London, 1859.

remained open and the silver level undisturbed—to pay for the opium and yarn which contribute so largely to India's favourable balance of trade. Many of course remain in China, though there seems no tendency to adopt them for use, in the interior, as current coin. The alleviation is, in any case, inappreciable as regards the needs of the empire; and small bits of silver, which have to be weighed and haggled over, afford the only medium between *cash* and *sycee*, as currency, inland.

One of the strangest clauses in the new treaty with the United States which Mr. Burlingame negotiated, during his remarkable mission in 1867, set out that the Emperor of China was penetrated with the necessity for an improvement and assimilation of the general currency of the world. There was a certain movement, at the time, in favour of a general currency; and that particular form of words may have been chosen for placing on record an admission that Chinese currency needed reform; or it may have been mere *fanfaronade*, designed to support the thesis that China was entitled, by her enlightenment, to a place in the comity of nations. Still, a sense of humour might, in either case, have suggested that, for the representative of copper *cash* to profess a conviction that the currency of the world needed reformation, exposed him too obviously to the retort that he had better begin by setting an example at home! Not that the Chinese are without a perception of the defect, though long use may have familiarized them

with the inconvenience; and one of the recurring attempts, of which their history is full, to effect a remedy was made during that remarkable year, 1887, when edict after edict held out hopes of progress that have been so sadly dashed.

About the same time that she was trying¹ to reform the currency of Peking, the Empress-Regent empowered the Viceroy of the Two Kwang to set up machinery for minting dollars in Canton. The unit chosen was a coin equivalent in value to the Mexican dollar; and mint machinery capable of producing this, and subsidiary coins down even to copper *cash*, was procured from England in the following year. But for some reason, or variety of reasons, the Canton dollar has never "taken." One may be that, handsome coin as it is, the Chinese still contrive to counterfeit it: considerable numbers, so well done that they would readily deceive the country people, have, from time to time, been seized in Hong Kong. A further cause may be found in the following extract from Mr. Consul Brennan's report on the trade of Canton for 1893:—

"This mint has not so far taken upon itself the duty of providing the people with a standard of value at the expense of the Government. It only cares to work at a profit. As there is no profit to be made in coining a standard unless some one can be found to pay a premium, the Canton dollar, which is a piece of the same weight as the Mexican, and of a nominal fineness of .900, is at present very little coined. But there is reason to believe that if bankers would pay a premium of, say 2 per cent., which would be sufficient to cover the cost of coining, the mint would be ready to coin dollars. However, as no assayer is employed, and the pro-

¹ Appendix G.

vincial treasury silver is taken to be pure, the Canton dollar is not of even fineness. Some of the first dollars coined here were found in the London mint to be actually .884 instead of .900 fine.

"The 20, 10, and 5-cent. pieces are sold to the public by tael, that is, 5, 10, and 20 per nominal dollar = Tl. 0.72. There is a profit to the mint on these coins, for their nominal standard of fineness is only 820, and their actual standard according to the London Mint assay, between 811 and 807. But there is a steady demand because of the convenience; their passing at above intrinsic value being an exemplification of Ricardo's proposition that the value of a coin depends on demand and supply. At present a 10-cent. piece exchanges for 100 copper *cash*, and ten 10-cent. pieces for 72·100ths of a tael. There is a voluntary demand among the people for these coins, and as the mint contents itself with supplying this demand, and has not, so far, taken measures to force the coins on the public, they seem likely to keep their present value in exchange. The profit on these subsidiary coins is said to pay something more than the expense of the mint, but without allowing interest on the large initial outlay. There is certain to be, in time, an immense demand for such small silver pieces, all over the Empire."

It is possible that, if Chang Chi-tung had remained at Canton, he might have nursed the scheme to greater success. But the system of provincial Home Rule which engenders so many cross-purposes left his mint at the mercy of his successor, and the following anecdote may show the amount of interest that successor was prepared to take. Chang had ordered from a bank in Hong Kong, for coinage purposes, a quantity of bar silver—which was tendered, of course, to the Provincial Government on arrival. But the new Viceroy refused it; and, when asked for an explanation, said the Empress had truly sanctioned the erection of a mint, but her edict said nothing about coining

dollars, and he could not undertake the task ! There were, as a matter of fact, actually coined at the Canton mint, during 1893, 14,500 dollars, 45,100 half-dollars, 13,923,900 20-cent. pieces, 14,216,400 10-cent. pieces, 127,100 5-cent. pieces, of the total value of 4,249,825 dols. There were also coined 135,350,187 copper *cash* ; though these can only be coined by European machinery at a loss, which was enhanced, during 1893, by the high silver price of copper. The banks can buy the new *cash* at the market rate of the day, say about 1400 to the tael, but they are principally put in circulation by being issued as pay to the troops, from whom bankers get them on better terms.

The Canton mint was, as we have seen, an important phase of a prevalent movement, at that time, in favour of currency reform. The Empress was issuing edicts designed to reintegrate Peking *cash*. There was also evolved—I believe at Wenchow—in the province of Chekeang, a dollar resembling the Mexican, admirably minted by a hand-die. There has been talk, by times, of erecting a mint at Tientsin ; and it does seem a little remarkable that this should have been the only progressive movement in which Li Hung-chang took no part. Possibly a perception of his countrymen's weaknesses, as keen as that of their needs, led him to anticipate that it would come to naught ; for the management of a mint does require somewhat more precision than even the management of an ironclad, and the Chinese have not shown a

capacity for attaining perfection even on that lower plane.

Somewhat late, perhaps, in the day, but with prospects of better success, it has been resolved, after much consideration and discussion, to add a British dollar to the various currencies in the East. It is a curious illustration of the difficulties caused by the widening gulf between silver and gold, that Hong Kong and the Straits Settlements, which are both silver-using colonies, should be suffering from a dearth of currency ; and scarcely less curious, perhaps, that it is only after more than fifty years of possession in the one case, and more than seventy in the other, that we are about to provide them with a British coin.

We have seen that, in the early days of European intercourse with China, the Carolus dollar ¹ was used as a medium of exchange ; and that circumstances, when these became scarce, led to the adoption of the Mexican dollar in its stead. The coin which served for our commercial relations with China came naturally to be used in Colonies whose population and connection are largely Chinese ; ² and so it has come about

¹ The Carolus is said to have reached, in 1854, a premium of 40 per cent. over the Mexican, which had just then been introduced. Curiously enough, it is still in demand for a particular district of the Malay peninsula—Province Wellesley. Supplies are derived from old hoards in the interior of the Philippines, and command a premium of 15 per cent.

² An attempt was made, during the time the Straits were governed from Calcutta, to introduce the rupee ; but it failed and had to be abandoned.

that the Mexican dollar is now legal tender in the Straits Settlements and Hong Kong, and circulates freely throughout the adjacent districts. Mexican dollars could obviously, however, not be obtained from Mexico without paying for them, and the mode of payment seems to have been chiefly in British goods. By putting a heavy duty on the export of bar silver, the Mexican Government obtains a monopoly of the ore produced, which it is thus enabled to manufacture into dollars at a highly profitable rate ; so that, as she has no other commercial exports to speak of, Mexico used to pay for her imports mainly in dollars—which were transmitted to London and sold for re-export to the East. Recently, however, as the appreciation of gold has hindered trade, the transaction has become more difficult. Declining to perceive that the value of her silver has fallen, but holding, rather, that it is gold which has risen, Mexico has been unwilling to give a higher silver price for goods ; has curtailed her demand and, like Japan, started manufactories of her own. So that the supply of Mexican dollars has been falling off. The Straits Settlements met the difficulty, in a measure, by legalizing the Japanese yen ; but Hong Kong deemed it inadvisable, for various reasons, to follow the example ; and, as the stringency increased, the question very naturally arose why these Colonies should continue to be dependent for their currency on foreign countries, and should not rather have a British dollar.

The conception is not altogether new. An attempt

was made to introduce a British dollar in Hong Kong, in 1866, but failed partly for want of Imperial support, and partly because the Mexican was, for the reasons stated, the cheaper coin. The cost of the mint was found to bear too heavily on the Colonial treasury, and an opportunity was taken of selling the plant to Japan, which was just then beginning her reforms and was willing to produce round instead of oblong money. The unit of Chinese account is, as we have seen, the *tael*—which means simply a Chinese ounce of pure silver; and Mr. (now Sir Thomas) Wade suggested to the Hong Kong Government, that it should base its new coinage on that standard. It is not impossible that, if the idea had found favour, Hong Kong taels would be now current in China. Dollars, however, formed the Colonial and commercial currency at the time, and to dollars it was resolved to adhere—the upshot being that, when the Hong Kong dollar was given up, the Mexican remained in possession of the field.

Still, this first British dollar was not abandoned without regret; and there have been, ever since, intermittent expressions of a desire for its revival. The project found active expression in the Straits Settlements in 1886-7, but subsided again in presence of a calculation that the Mexican was still a cheaper coin. But after the fresh blows dealt to silver by the closing of the Indian mints and the repeal of the Sherman Act, these conditions began to change. For the reasons already explained, the supply of Mexicans began to fall off and their

market value to increase. The absorption of these coins in the East is enormous—it has reached, occasionally, 4,000,000*l.* in the course of a year—and fears of a financial crisis began to be entertained. The agitation for a dollar which should be independent of these extraneous influences began, therefore, to be revived in earnest.

The Hong Kong Chamber of Commerce appointed a Special Committee, composed of leading merchants and bankers, who reported that the scarcity of the circulating medium was highly inconvenient and might at any moment become dangerous; and that it was “imperatively necessary that immediate action should be taken in the direction of the coinage and legalization of a British dollar.” Appeals were made to the London, Shanghai, and Singapore Chambers of Commerce, and to the “China” and “Straits” Associations, for support; and all these various bodies eventually combined in recommending the project to the consideration of her Majesty’s Government. For it was of the essence of the proposal, this time, that the new coin should be made legal tender in the Straits Settlements as well as in Hong Kong, in order to give it a wider reputation and a broader foothold from whence it might make way, like the Mexican, through the adjacent territories.

The next question was that of value, and it was decided to advocate a coin exactly equal in weight and fineness to the Mexican, which has practically inspired the value of all recent coinage in Eastern

Asia. The occasion was a tempting one for giving the new coin a calculable relation to the rupee, and a suggestion was thrown out that this object might be attained by giving it a value of Rs. $2\frac{1}{4}$. There would be no advantage, obviously, in such a course, so long as the dollar follows the fortunes of silver and the rupee is inflated by contracting supply ; but there are some who believe that the present currency troubles are only an interlude, and that when the rupee is replaced on a silver level it would be convenient to have the currency of our Eastern dependencies on an interchangeable basis. The rupee being 180 grs. $\cdot 916$ fine = 165 pure, a coin worth Rs. $2\frac{1}{4}$ would (at the preferable rate of $\cdot 900$ fine) be $412\frac{1}{2}$ grs. = $371\frac{1}{4}$ pure. The Mexican, which is somewhat roughly minted, is 416 to 417 grs. $\cdot 900$ fine = 374 to 376 pure ; so that a Rs. $2\frac{1}{4}$ coin would be worth about 1 per cent. less than the Mexican.

Some believed that this would be fatal to its acceptance by the Chinese, while others held that, as the Mexican differs nearly 1 per cent. from the Carolus, there is no reason why a British dollar should not supplant the Mexican as the Mexican supplanted its predecessor. What was more certain was that the proposal would entail delay, while the Colonies were starving for coin. Such a change could not be made without much reference and consideration, and there might be delay in getting the new coin into circulation even if it were adopted ; whereas a British dollar exactly equal in intrinsic value to the

coins it was designed to supplant offered no such difficulty. A British dollar 416 grs. ·900 fine = 375 pure would be the exact equivalent of the old Hong Kong dollar, of the Japanese yen, of the average Mexican, and practically of the new dollar which we have seen created by the Government of Canton—with all of which it would come into contact and concurrence.

Another question was the design ; and this, with a people so conservative as the Chinese, had more than artistic significance. The old Hong Kong dollar recommended itself chiefly by its ugliness. The only good thing about it was the Queen's head ; and that constitutes a financially objectionable feature, for the simple reason that every change of sovereign would mean, in the eyes of Chinamen, a new kind of coin which would have to recommence the struggle for existence. St. George and the Dragon was suggested, but was resisted by every one who knows the Chinese, for the simple reason that the conception of an European warrior killing the Chinese totem would be voted unlucky, and would be sufficient to condemn the coin. The other dollars enumerated have all a national emblem—the Canton dollar a dragon, the Mexican an eagle, the Japanese a rising sun—and it was considered that we could not do better than follow the example. It is decided, accordingly, that the new British dollar shall bear an erect figure of Britannia on the obverse, and its value expressed in Chinese and Oordoo, on the reverse. The

purpose is that it shall be minted in Bombay, and shall follow the fortunes of silver, with an open mint. Bankers or others who want currency for the East will tender so much silver bullion, and receive it back in the shape of British dollars, minus one per cent. for the cost of minting. The project has thus been worked out in all its details, and as the legal machinery required for launching it cannot be complicated, there is every prospect that the new coin will be available almost as soon as these pages are in print. A short Act may perhaps be wanted in India, to authorize an Indian mint to do work other than that of coining rupees ; and short Acts will be necessary, in the Straits and Hong Kong Legislatures, to make the new coin legal tender alongside of those now current ; for it is an essential feature of the scheme that there is no purpose of violently changing the present currency. The new British dollar will be introduced as an additional and supplementary coin ; so that it will glide into circulation without shock, and will have time to establish itself in popular affection while gradually displacing—as it will no doubt eventually do—the Mexican dollar and the Japanese yen.

I have dwelt mainly on the commercial features of the case, because the new dollar is of essentially commercial origin. We are told, now, that credit is everything and the quantitative theory exploded, in Western finance ; but Eastern bankers are still under the hallucination that hard money is useful, and became anxious in view of a restricted supply.

It is the needs of commerce, therefore, that have dictated the demand for the new coin. But there are, besides, political considerations of no mean importance involved. It may have been all very well to take what coins offered, and chanced to suit the purpose, when our Eastern Colonies were in their infancy; but Hong Kong has become a port of enormous tonnage, an important naval and military centre, and a great entrepôt of commerce, while the Settlements in the Straits have not only developed an immense trade, but have extended their influence over the Malayan Peninsula. There is something incongruous in Colonies of such considerable importance having to depend for their currency on a precarious supply of foreign coins. From every point of view, therefore, political as well as commercial, it is matter for congratulation that the defect is about to be supplied.

We have now, I think, passed in review the salient features of Chinese industry and industrial policy; and I trust the endeavour has been successful to expose, concurrently with the facts, the forces which are making for and against industrial and commercial progress. The chaotic condition of finance; the harassing nature of inland taxation; the propensity of the Mandarins to have a finger in every financial pie, and the popular disinclination to put fruit in any pie which the Mandarins are to handle; the suspicious jealousy of foreigners which prevents *frank* acceptance of their help and instruction—all

these need to be taken into consideration, as well as the evident conviction, in high quarters, that railways and telegraphs, and the development of mines and industries, are as essential as ironclads and repeating rifles to the future safety and prosperity of the nation.

There is clearly wanting the energy and quick intelligence which impelled the Japanese to assimilate, with breathless rapidity, the forms and appliances of a civilization which they recognized as superior to their own. But then the Chinaman, to begin with, makes no such admission; 249,000,000 out of the 250,000,000 (more or less) who inhabit the eighteen provinces still consider their own civilization the finest in the world; and the result of that conviction is that they have been beaten, right and left, by a nation possessing but a tithe of their number or resources, but which perceived and set itself to remedy its defects, and has displayed a capacity for organization in diametrical contrast to the unwieldiness of its adversary. The 200 miles of hardly constructed railway in Pechili contrast ill with the 2000 miles that have been completed in Japan; and the failure of the Mandarins to attract native capital to the enterprises tardily sanctioned, contrasts ill with the confidence shown by the Japanese in subscribing freely to Government loans and investing freely in private undertakings. Japan has established a mint, and is turning out coins that pass current in the Straits Settlements, while China is still struggling with a currency that would drive any occidental nation

frantic. Japan has adopted all modern machinery and improvements for the production of tea and silk, with encouraging results, while China is losing ground through stolid adherence to the methods of the past.

There is no limit, however, to the field of discussion which the Chinese character opens up; nor does it seem possible to make a single reflection that does not require counterbalancing by some opposite consideration. If we are inclined to despair, sometimes, in view of the slowness and conservatism of the Chinese people, of the vanity and jealousy of the *literati*, and the prevalent venality of the officials, neither can we avoid recognizing the great qualities—the frugality, industry, perseverance, and capacity which have enabled them to extend, in the course of centuries, from the basin of the Wei over the whole area of the immense empire which they now rule; and to elaborate a system of ethics and of government, a literature and a social organization, differing remarkably from our own, but efficient to maintain cohesion and national prosperity while the kingdoms of Western Asia were rising and disappearing in periodic convulsions. Surely a race which has shown this persistence, and which gives evidence of the same qualities to-day, will end by proving that its defects are the result of misgovernment rather than of incapacity, and will learn, from its present stress, to adapt itself to the new conditions with which it is brought in contact.

CHAPTER VIII.

TRADE WITH SOUTH-WEST CHINA.

It is scarcely too much to say that the teeming life and commerce disclosed by the effective opening up of Central China in 1858-60 came upon the European public with the force of a revelation. The imagination was easily led to conceive that the western provinces might be as populous and productive as those of the east and centre ; and so south-west China came to be one of the great objects of adventure of the day. The expression was somewhat vague, but was meant to comprise the group of provinces in the vicinity of Burmah and Indo-China that were not practically accessible from the sea-board. Of these Szechuen and Yunnan stood out most prominently, Kwangse and Kweichow lying more dimly in the background. Experience has since shown that Szechuen must be detached from the group. The wealth and commerce and population of this great province have not only equalled but surpassed anticipation ; but it has been proved, also, that the natural outlet of Szechuen is down the Yangtze, and it is in the last degree unlikely that any land route can ever compete with that great waterway.

It was towards Yunnan, therefore, that the attention of explorers came to be practically directed ; and upon Yunnan that all south-western trade routes were found to converge. De Lagrée's historical expedition up the Meikong ; Dupuis' adventure on the Songkoi ; the journey which resulted in Margary's unhappy murder at Manwein ; Mr. Colquhoun's attempt to explore the caravan route across the Shan States from Szumao, were all inspired by ambition to tap, for English or French advantage, the legendary wealth of Yunnan. The annexation of Tongking may, as M. Ferry affirmed before the Senate in 1883, have been a continuation of Louis XVI.'s endeavour to find compensation in Indo-China for losses sustained in India. But it was avowedly inspired, at the moment, by a hope of beating England in the race for access to Yunnan ; just as the British annexation of Burmah was undoubtedly hastened by attempts to assert French influence at Mandalay, and by intrigues for the annexation to Tongking of the very provinces, on the upper Meikong, which England has now again stepped in to protect.

Experience has scarcely tended, so far, to justify all this ardour ; and more than one discordant note has been struck by travellers who wished to discourage the idea that all roads leading into Yunnan were necessarily practicable highways and potential outlets of wealth. Mr. Colborne Baber objected to some early projects of railway enterprise in the neighbourhood of Bhamo, that a series of Menai

bridges and Mont Cenis tunnels would be needed to meet the exigencies of the situation : Mr. Colquhoun showed that the Songkoi would have to be supplemented by a railway, if steam is to be utilized as a means of carriage above Laokai ; while currency and other difficulties, and perhaps a latent feeling that the time was not yet quite ripe, have combined to delay the more ambitious project of a railway from southern Burmah across the Shan States to Szumao.

There was rather a tendency, in fact, at one time, to recoil from the original expectation of tapping an Eldorado, into the opposite extreme. A pendulum which has swung strongly one way is prone to swing back ; and the reports of early explorers disclosed a picture so different from that which had been preconceived, that many were tempted to consider Yunnan altogether a fraud. Such a conclusion would be opposed, however, to the evidence of tradition, and to the more practical evidence of ruined buildings and public works—bridges, causeways, temples and official quarters—which bear silent testimony to former affluence. Reports of mineral wealth are commonly exaggerated, but it is absurd to suppose that the prevalent traditions were wholly fictitious : the supplies of copper needed for the enormous petty currency of China have been drawn traditionally from Yunnan. And the Arabs had, presumably, some other object besides selling opium, in their early excursions up the Irrawady.

The real cause of the decadence which disap-

pointed early explorers was the great Mahomedan uprising, which seemed, at one time, so near permanent success that a Mission was sent from India, under Major Sladen, to arrange terms of commercial intercourse with the new Power. It was the same mistake that was made in the case of Yakoob Khan; the same failure to take into account the reserve strength, tenacity, and unquenchable perseverance of the Chinese. The destruction of life—by war, pestilence and famine—during the long struggle, has been estimated at ten millions; but even if we halve the figure, and picture the anarchy implied, there need be little difficulty in accepting the incident as a sufficient cause of the temporary effacement of Yunnan trade.

Exploration and experience are tending, now, to show that, while there is no single road to wealth in south-west China, there are different channels of commerce with different sections of a highly mountainous province. The northern districts find easier access to the Yangtze; a considerable trade passes through Bhamo; there is the traditional caravan route down the valley of the Meikong into the Shan States and Siam; there is the Songkoi (Red River) route into Tongking; and there is the great West River which traverses Southern China, receiving affluents from all directions—from the hills bordering Kweichow on the north, and from the frontiers of Tongking on the south—during its course of some 700 miles from the frontiers of Yunnan to the sea.

It is probably due, in a measure, to the anxiety of

England and France to secure each its own special private road, that we have heard comparatively little of attempts to utilize this great historic channel of trade. Mr. Moss,¹ who was commissioned to explore the West River, in 1870, by the Hong Kong Chamber of Commerce; Mr. Colquhoun,² who traversed its entire length to Pésé, on the frontier of Yunnan, during his excursion "across Chrysé;" Mr. Agassiz,³ who descended it from Lungchow on the frontier of Tongking, in 1890, bear testimony to the evidences of former prosperity in the ruined cities, the remains of once handsome Yaméns, temples, and guildhalls along its banks; and all concur in attributing this prosperity in a large measure to the through traffic from Yunnan which found its way, in former times, from Pésé to Canton. It is reasonable to suppose that Kwangse contributed its quota; for, though reckoned commonly among the poorer Chinese provinces, Kwangse is said to have owed its distinction as the headquarters of the Taeping rebellion to its reputation as a rice-producing district.

Deeply interested as we were at the time in that great movement, through the participation of our own forces and through Gordon's conspicuous

¹ Narrative and Commercial Report of an Exploration of the West River to Nanning-fu, Hong Kong, 1870.

² Exploration through the South China Borderlands, from the mouth of the Sikiang (West River) to the banks of the Irrawadi. By A. R. Colquhoun, Proceedings of R. G. S., Dec. 1882.

³ From Haiphong (in Tongking) to Canton, overland. By A. R. Agassiz, Proceedings of R. G. S., May 1891.

career, we are apt to forget, now, the enduring harm which it did to the Chinese body politic. Except perhaps Hunan—which furnished the bulk of the troops employed in its suppression, and which has lately signalized itself as a centre of hostility to foreign Missionary enterprise—hardly a province escaped disturbance, while many were reduced to anarchy. For rebellion means, in China, ruin and devastation. Cities are destroyed, whole regions depopulated, agriculture is reduced to a minimum, and commerce well nigh extinguished. All this has happened, within the present generation, to the two provinces which contributed mainly to the former traffic on the West River. It is not surprising, therefore, that travellers should have been impressed by a general appearance of decay. It is more pertinent to remember their testimony to the evidences of former prosperity.

It would seem natural to assume that that prosperity might be expected to revive with the restoration of order, and a return to the normal conditions of local life. It would seem equally reasonable to suppose that the Chinese Government, and especially the Provincial Authority, would be careful and anxious to promote that revival by every means in its power. But whoso argues on the assumption that Mandarins will act as Europeans would do, prepares for himself, commonly, a period of undeception. There are symptoms that Yunnan is beginning to recover; but the reviving trade is tending to go down the Songkoi. There is a certain

amount of commerce on the upper waters of the West River ; but it is carried on mainly by way of Pakhoi, whence foreign goods are carried overland on men's backs and reshipped, on the upper reaches, to the city of Nanning which serves as a distributing centre for Western Kwangse.

The secret of this eccentricity is taxation. Just as mal-administration must be held largely responsible for the great Mahomedan and Taeping rebellions, so mal-administration must be held responsible for the diversion of trade from its natural highways, and for the threatened transfer of the Yunnan trade to an alien route. In no part of China have inland Customs barriers been found so numerous or vexatious as in the Kwang Viceroyalty ; and they appear to have reached, on the West River, a prohibitive limit. The Hong Kong Chamber of Commerce has suggested, accordingly, that an endeavour should be made to persuade the Imperial Government to open up the West River as far as Nanning to steam, with rights of trade and residence at the three important centres of Wuchow, Tsunchow and Nanning. For steamers are inimical to these barriers. They cannot be brought up and delayed and hampered, and the owners of their cargo worried and threatened. They are not at the mercy of wind and tide and, consequently, of official row-boats and official underlings. The owners of cargo which they carry demand, as a matter of right, to pay the Treaty rate of Transit due, in exchange for which the Imperial Customs

officials give them, as a matter of course, a Transit pass under whose protection the goods are landed safely at the inland city to which they are consigned. A certain amount of local taxation is incurred afterwards, along the minor waterways which serve as distributing channels; but very much has been gained when the goods have been laid down cheaply and expeditiously at some inland centre. Nor is steam the only solvent of the difficulty. The right to reside and trade at Nanning would be an appreciable advantage, even if steamers should not be able to get so far. The foreign merchant, the foreign consul, and the Imperial Customs constitute a sort of *tête de pont* of foreign commerce. Foreign goods consigned to a city where these exist are no longer dependent only on the long arm of a Protecting Agency at the port of departure; there is a friendly hand, now, at the other end of the journey to welcome and protect them against infraction of their Treaty rights.

The institution of the Imperial Maritime Customs was not an unmixed blessing to the provincial mandarins. In former days each province was practically an administrative unit, levying its own taxes subject to certain contributions for Imperial purposes. With the advent of foreigners that was changed. The maritime customs, which used to be an integral portion of the local revenue subject to a fixed contribution to Peking, became an integral portion of the Imperial revenue subject to a certain contribution to the province. Nor was that all.

Besides establishing an Imperial Customs Service, the Treaties of Tientsin reiterated a stipulation which had been exacted by Sir Henry Pottinger sixteen years previously, but which had never been enforced, that foreign goods might be sent inland and native produce brought down to the coast on payment of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. transit duty ; thus diverting and interfering with the petty local levies. This not only lessened the quantity of straw available for making the provincial bricks, but lessened the volume of money of which individual officials might take toll. No mandarin can possibly "carry on" on his official salary ; and when once the necessity of supplementing it is admitted, the possibilities become elastic.

Thus, public necessities and private possibilities were both interfered with by these innovations. A Chinese official once declared, in a moment of expansion, that the underlying motive for the murder of Margary was a determination to ward off the fiscal changes which were looked upon as a concomitant of foreign trade. The Maritime Customs duties were accepted with comparative ease, perhaps because foreign trade was the main contributor to the revenue, for only ships of foreign type were amenable to the new system. But the Transit privilege has been a source of perpetual difficulty. In one way or another things have accommodated themselves, in the north. But the Local Authority has been sufficiently strong, as yet, to defeat the provision completely, in the southern

provinces ! An effort, which promised at first to be successful, was made, three years ago, to enforce its observance. But the officials quickly devised a means to thwart the innovation. A case was mentioned, not long ago, in Parliament, where a British merchant who had ventured to open a warehouse at Fatshan, twelve miles out of Canton, had had his goods seized, his servants imprisoned, and his books carried off. It would be beyond the present purpose to discuss, at length, the merits or demerits of his experiment. It was open to the Provincial Authorities to contend that he was exceeding his privilege, and to request Her Majesty's consul to call upon him to withdraw. But that would not have answered their purpose. What they wanted was to extinguish transit passes ; and they saw here an opportunity of doing, indirectly, what they dared not do by direct attack. They set to work accordingly to mulct so heavily, and to harass so variously the native merchants who were shown, by the books, to have had dealings with him, that applications for transit passes ceased altogether before six months had passed.

This question of transit duty therefore will, no doubt, inspire much local opposition to inland steam navigation.

Another plea which will, of course, be alleged is the inevitable interference with the native carrying industry. But the answer seems valid that there is, at present, on the upper portion of the West River, scarcely any industry to hurt.

The circumstances are very similar to those which prevailed on the Yangtze when Lord Elgin opened that great river to foreign commerce. At the time the British flag first appeared at Hankow, the Taepings had overrun the valley of the Yangtze and captured the principal cities along its banks. Some of these had been recovered, mere heaps of ruins; several remained in their hands. Trade on the lower part of the river, between Kiukiang and the sea, had virtually ceased. Five years later Gordon crushed the head of the rebel power at Soochow, and Tseng Kwo-chuan completed its destruction, in 1864, by the capture of Nanking. In the meantime the clause in the Tientsin treaty opening the river to foreign trade had been put in force. The first merchant steamer left Shanghai early in 1861; going ahead even of the British squadron which was to give éclat to the proceeding. The Customs Returns show that the total value of the trade was, in that first year, Tls. 9,668,000. Among the most notable items were 2,121,000 lbs. of tea, 269,000 pieces of grey shirtings and 88,000 pieces of T. cloths. Ten years later, Hankow alone exported 50,000,000 lbs. of tea, and imported 1,259,000 pieces of shirtings and 659,000 pieces of T. cloths. There was hardly a junk floating on the lower Yangtze when the first foreign steamers began to ply. The plea of interference with the native boat industry was therefore estopped, and a fair chance offered of testing the foreign answer that

steam encourages carrying industry by developing trade and creating a subsidiary traffic. Steamers exclude, no doubt, many large junks which would be employed in their absence; but the tea they bring down, and the manufactures they take up, need carriage by thousands of smaller craft between the larger and the subsidiary ports. Nor do they monopolize the whole of the main traffic. Large quantities of native goods—things which do not spoil—and the market for which is steady, still travel by junk. So there is the fact, patent to Chinese as well as foreigners, that junk trade has revived on the Yangtze alongside the steamers; and foreigners plausibly aver that the impulse of foreign enterprise and the facilities of steam carriage were largely instrumental in reviving a trade which had been well nigh crushed out of existence at the time steamers first made their appearance on the river.

It would have seemed to the European mind that, if the professed anxiety of the mandarins for the interests of the people were genuine, this experience on the Yangtze should have been followed by wider developments. But sentiments of unalloyed purity are exceedingly rare in this world; and mandarin sentiments are, as I have endeavoured to show, very complicated indeed. Taking them all round, Chinese officials are less obtuse, probably, to the sense of duty than it is the fashion to pretend. But that sense is apt to be coloured by many conflicting impressions, and it is unfortunately

certain that, among those impressions, a desire to keep foreigners from extending their foothold in China is pre-eminent. The "China Merchants Steam Navigation Company"—a purely Chinese Company supported, as we have seen, by official capital and patronage—tried not long ago to obtain permission to ply on the West River; but they were refused for the reason, it is understood, that foreigners would be sure to want the same privilege; and where foreign steamers went foreign merchants would want to follow; and where merchants and consuls were established foreign missionaries, who have been somewhat shy of this turbulent region, would be emboldened to go too, with the certain result of turmoil, riot, and political trouble.

The conditions have changed somewhat since that first approach was opened; and it seems to be thought not impossible that the Provincial Government might be less unwilling, now, to entertain the project. In the first place Chang Chi-tung—who, though he appreciates foreign appliances, strongly dislikes foreign intrusion—has been succeeded as Viceroy by Li Han-chang, a brother of the famous Grand Secretary; and in the second, a set of considerations have arisen which may tend to counterbalance the dislike to foreign intrusion. For it has become evident that the Chinese must choose between freeing the West River and seeing the Yunnan trade diverted across Tongking.

The treaty which terminated the Franco-Chinese contest for the possession of Tongking opened two stations for frontier trade ; Mengtze for Yunnan, and Lungchow for Kwangse ; the design being, in both cases, to tap a region that was once served by the West River. And the French Colonial Authorities have done their best to improve the opportunity. They have placed small steamers on the Songkoi, which has been found navigable as far as Laokai ; and they have made a railway from Phu Lang-thuong (on the head waters of the Haiphong river) to Langson, on the way to Kwangse.

Although very far, yet, from satisfying the expectations which were held out as a motive for conquering Tongking, the Songkoi route has achieved a certain measure of success. Merchandise to the value of £450,000 passed along it in 1893 ; and the steady annual increase since it was first opened, in 1889, justifies anticipation of further improvement as Yunnan recovers from its depression. It so far bears out the tradition of the former elements of Yunnanese prosperity, that tin figures in the Returns as an increasing export ; while a proof that the Yunnanese are not behind their countrymen of the Eastern provinces, in prompt appreciation of what suits their needs, may be found in the growing import of Indian yarn. But what is most significant, for our present purpose, is that this trade is facilitated by a full recognition of the Transit Pass system. The greater portion of the imports into Mengtze go on

into the interior of Yunnan under Transit Pass. So that the Chinese are actually facilitating the diversion of Yunnan trade across Tongking by refusing, in the case of the West River in their own territory, privileges which they admit in the case of the Songkoi. Provincial views are proverbially narrow, and vested interests proverbially strong; but if the Government of the Kwang provinces remain indifferent to such a situation, the Imperial Government can surely not be impervious to its absurdity. National pride and national interest should impel them to make every effort to draw back the reviving trade to its normal channel.

Nor is the trade of Yunnan only to be considered. It may be doubtful whether Haiphong will be able to compete with Pakhoi, even when the railway has been carried on to Lungchow, and when Tongking has been cleared of the banditti who still kidnap, occasionally, a French employé, and render travelling around Langson dangerous without an armed escort. Phu Lang-thuong is situated on the head waters of the Thaibinh, which rises in the mountainous region that separates the Tongking delta, geographically, from Kwangse. Light draught steamers and gunboats can ascend the river so far; so the place naturally suggests itself as a military and commercial depôt. It is situated, moreover, on the great Imperial road which runs throughout the whole length of Annam, from Saigon to the Chinese

frontier. So far, therefore, it is clearly on the natural line of communication between the two countries. But Phu Lang-thuong is on the south, and Langson is on the north, of the watershed; so that the West River would seem a more natural way of access; and what trade there is appears, as a matter of fact, to flow, at present, between Langson and Pakhoi, through Lungchow and Nanning, instead of across the Tongking delta. But the entire value of the merchandise which passed through the Customs Station of Lungchow, in 1893, was barely £9000.

The contention is, then, that these are both forced routes, and that the natural channel of trade for the whole region which the West River drains is the West River itself, if the Chinese Authorities would facilitate instead of impeding commercial movement. The fact that Nanning should draw its supplies preferably from Pakhoi, instead of by the direct waterway from Canton, is a speaking proof of the fiscal hindrances goods must encounter along the West River. For they have to be shipped, in the first instance, from Hong Kong to Pakhoi; then carried a short distance by water, then on men's backs over a range of hills, and re-shipped on the upper reaches. It is scarcely surprising, therefore, to learn that the cost of conveyance by this route is greater than from Canton to Nanning by the West River, and that the reason the latter is avoided is the number of Customs stations at which the goods have to pay duty. Of the exact number

of these stations Mr. Agassiz is not sure, but "believes there are not less than ten!" The consequence is obvious: "many articles of foreign manufacture cost so much," after these varied experiences, "that none but the wealthy can afford to buy them."

And what is true of Nanning must be true of the rest of the province. The maps of Kwangse have not been trigonometrically surveyed; but they are sufficiently accurate to exhibit the numerous waterways that permeate the province, converging upon the central artery which traverses it from Yunnan to Canton. It is not pretended that these streams are navigable by steamers; but they are navigable for Chinese boats. The idea of boat traffic seems familiar, in connection with China; but one must have travelled on the upper waters of a Chinese river, to appreciate the full extent to which this means of carriage is utilized. We have barges and nothing more; and anything more cumbersome than our canal barge was never, surely, devised by the mind of man. Where the barge ends with us, the cart begins. But when the Chinaman has sailed and poled and sculled his more manageable craft to the equivalent limit, other Chinamen are prepared to carry on the cargo in lighter boats, and eventually on rafts, up to the very head waters of the stream. All these affluents are, therefore, potential channels of trade, provided the Mandarins do not throttle them by Customs barriers.

Taking the arm which flows from Pésé past Nan-

ning, as the main stream, the West River receives three principal affluents—the Fu-ho, which joins it at Wuchow after flowing some 150 miles from Kweilin, the capital of Kwangse; the Pak-ho, which joins it at Tsunchow, after a course of more than 300 miles from the frontier of Yunnan, during which it has received affluents from the borders of Kweichow; and the Likiang, which places Nanning in communication with Lungchow on the frontier of Tongking. It is these three cities, therefore,—Wuchow, Tsunchow and Nanning—that Hong Kong merchants want to have opened to foreign commerce.

It is not pretended that the West River is a second Yangtze, or that Kwangse compares in population or wealth with the provinces watered by that great river. Still, it was formerly a great rice-producing district, and Mr. Moss's careful inquiries disclosed the existence of other products, and of a certain commerce *viâ* Pakhoi, even under the extreme conditions of recent devastation, of existing turbulence, and of fiscal oppression, then prevailing. The Southern Viceroyalty has always had the reputation of being the most unruly in the Empire. It is not surprising, therefore, that the officials should have been slow in reducing to order the turbulent elements which the rebellion let loose. But conditions of political insecurity retard industrial recovery. Small craft fall an easy prey to river pirates; and the very war-junks which are employed, in China, to maintain order are accused of occasional demoralization. Still they represent

the machinery, however imperfect, by which order must be gradually restored; and the necessity for their maintenance gives an excuse for taxation which, in its turn, oppresses commerce. The argument is plausible, that no more effective means of remedying all these hindrances can be devised than the introduction of a means of carriage, at once expeditious and cheap, which can set brigands and extortion alike at defiance, and which would promote the revival of trade by the security and facilities it would offer.

There remains the question of navigation, and it may seem an inversion of the argument to have postponed this important consideration. But the fact is that, in this as in some other respects, our knowledge lacks somewhat in precision. The river was surveyed for the first 200 miles, up to Wuchow, and found to be navigable for that distance, by Lieutenant Bullock, R.N., in 1859. But our information in regard to the upper reaches is less precise. It seems clear, from Mr. Colquhoun's observations, that we may dismiss the thought of steamers being able to reach the frontier of Yunnan. Neither is that project entertained. What is desired is right of access to Nanning, which is some 360 miles above Wuchow, and 560, therefore, from Canton. In his journey so far, Mr. Colquhoun had been preceded by one, and has been succeeded by another, traveller. Mr. Agassiz, who descended the river after making his way to Nanning, across Tongking, in 1890,

concurs with him in noting the existence of rapids which would constitute awkward difficulties. But they both travelled at a time of dead low water, and the rise of the river at Nanning, the year before Mr. Colquhoun's visit, had been sixty feet. There would appear good ground, therefore, for supposing that the aspect of things may be materially changed during the summer season ; and Mr. Moss's experience confirms that impression. His journey of exploration from Canton to Nanning and back, extended from the 26th of April, when the water was still low, to the 8th of July, when it had attained about half its maximum rise ; and his conclusion was that, at the latter date, " there appeared no obstacle to the ascent of steam vessels as far as Nanning."

There is no doubt, as we have seen, about navigability at all seasons to Wuchow ; it is stated that, even at the period of lowest water, a depth of two fathoms may be secured in that section. Immediately after Wuchow is passed, however, the character of the river changes. Several islands are encountered, and the channel is further broken by rapids and rocks which would bar the ascent to steamers of any great length or depth of draught. To such, Wuchow must be regarded as the terminal point, but to specially adapted vessels the obstacles are not, in Mr. Moss's opinion, insurmountable. The assumption of the Hong Kong Chamber of Commerce, that Nanning may be reached during many months of the year would appear, therefore, *not unreasonable*.

It may be instructive to note the precise language in which Mr. Moss summarizes his observations :—

“Journeying up the river in a native boat drawing less than two feet of water, which is tracked along the banks, or (even if the wind serve) hugs the shore to avoid the full strength of the current, the traveller’s conclusions as to its general navigability must necessarily be vague. When, on his return, he descends in mid-channel, he gains a clearer conception ; but the imperfect knowledge the natives themselves possess of its depth, beyond that which suffices to float their own craft, still leaves him in doubt and uncertainty which do not justify an unhesitating and positive opinion. The conclusion at which he will most probably arrive is that suitable steamboats will find a practicable channel during several months in, though not throughout the whole year ; and that the descent is more likely to be attended with danger than the ascent. It is obvious that the essentials of such steam-vessels are light draught, large power, short length, and excellent steering qualities.”

Between Wuchow and Nanning, Chinese itineraries give the names of sixty-nine rapids ; but it must not be understood that these stretch across the whole width of the river, or that there is no channel between them where they occur in the largest number and closest succession. Along the first forty miles, again at 100 and 200 miles above Wuchow, and also below Nanning, there are points which would most likely be found impassable when the river is low, and along which, even when it is high, navigation would still be attended with danger, owing in a measure to the force of the current, and in a measure to fluctuations in the flood level incidental to the intensity and area of the rainfall in the regions from which its affluents derive.

From the beginning of the fourth (Chinese) month till the end of the seventh—i.e. about May—August—the river increases in volume more or less rapidly according to the rainfall, and then begins to subside, reaching its lowest level about December. In times of exceptional flood it may rise as much as sixty feet above the winter level; but the average rise is estimated at from twenty-five feet to thirty-five feet. At the time of Mr. Moss's excursion, the rise in the first week of July had not exceeded twelve or fifteen feet, and in the condition of the river at that time there appeared to him, as we have already seen, "no obstacle to the ascent of steam vessels as far as Nanning."

Above Nanning the river is navigable 200 miles farther, by native boats, to Pésé on the frontier of Yunnan, which Mr. Colquhoun found to be a place of considerable movement. He succeeded, indeed, in travelling thirty miles farther, in smaller and shallower craft; but Pésé is the head of practical navigation; though it is an interesting contribution to our knowledge of the river and of the Chinese talent for utilizing waterways, to note that even these 30 miles involved a rise of 500 feet, whereas the previous 700 miles from Canton to Pésé had only involved a similar ascent. Henceforward, therefore, the traffic must be land-borne, and it is easy to understand that superior inducements would have to be held out, instead of obstacles being interposed, if the West River is to resume its former importance in face of French competition.

From Pèsé to Yunnan-fu is eighteen days' journey, and Mr. Colquhoun records his impression that it might easily be made shorter and better, just as the channel of the West River might easily be improved, if the Chinese Government could be induced to realize the value of the undertaking. But even if these results cannot be brought to pass; if we cannot hope that the Chinese will undertake, as yet, the necessary engineering works, it is fair to infer that the partial and even sectional introduction of steam would stimulate the tardy recovery of Kwangse, and tend to encourage the return to its normal channel of the great trade with Yunnan which was temporarily extinguished or diverted during the anarchy that prevailed, for well-nigh a generation, throughout south-west China. At present, the upward traffic seems practically blocked at Wuchow. Even the provincial capital, Kweilin, which is situated on the head waters of the considerable affluent which falls into the West River near that city, is said to draw its supplies overland from the Yangtze, instead of by the incomparably shorter water route from Canton; while Nanning is supplied, as we have seen, from Pakhoi. And though it is easy to conceive that these routes may have been adopted perforce, during a period of political insecurity, it is inconceivable that they could be permanently preferred if the normal conditions were restored; just as it is inconceivable that trade can be otherwise than dwarfed by such costly divagations.

It is equally inconceivable that the Tongking route should prove so far superior as to draw away the entire trade which used to flow down to Canton, if measures are taken to facilitate, instead of hindering, its return. For the Songkoi was always there; and as foreigners traded freely to Hungyeu, the then commercial capital of Tongking, at the close of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries, it can hardly be contended that there was no mart then for Yunnan produce if it were brought down. The inquiry might, indeed, be interesting whether Yunnan did really contribute to the considerable trade which once made it worth while for the East India Company and its rivals to have factories and keep up regular intercourse with Tongking; but it would have to be pursued into regions too recondite for our present purpose, which is chiefly to deal with the conditions as disclosed by modern exploration and created or modified by recent political changes in that interesting corner of Asia. Enough has been said to show that the threatened rivalry between the Songkoi and the West River constitutes an interesting and important problem, and that the consent or refusal of the Chinese to open the latter to modern navigation may have important consequences for their own as well as for foreign interests.

CHAPTER IX.

THE IMPERIAL MARITIME CUSTOMS.

IF it be true that sound finance is the basis of all good government, the preceding chapters will have made evident the chief source of evil in the government of China. From the President of the Imperial Council down to the smallest provincial mandarin, no one is paid a sufficient salary; and the natural consequence is that every one takes measures to remedy the defect. The consequence is equally natural that very few draw a clear line between what might under the circumstances be considered excusable, and what is clearly illegitimate, acquisition. It is one secret of the influence enjoyed by Chang Chi-tung that he has the reputation of being clean-handed, while others are stigmatized as types of avarice. It may be taken, perhaps, as a healthy sign that public opinion does draw distinctions; but every degree of acquisitiveness may be found between the two extremes. The evil is fostered by the prescriptive right to office conferred by success in the Examinations, and by the bribery to which that custom gives rise; enhanced, too, by the custom

which surrounds every office-holder, in *esse* or in *posse*, with a crowd of relatives and sycophants who expect to accompany him and batten on his preserve. It is not uncommon for usurers to finance a clever literate; supplying him with an income till office comes, and with funds to expedite its arrival; so that he starts in debt, and with every motive to exact all he can in order to pay that debt off and accumulate a fortune for himself during his incumbency. Such a system is obviously fatal to good administration; but the difficulty of purifying it, where every member is interested in upholding the present condition, is equally clear. To look for spontaneous reform would appear hopeless. The remedy must come from without; and there exists one great and admirably managed Department that might, conceivably, be extended to leaven the whole lump.

The Foreign Customs Establishment in China is the product of circumstances. The Chinese Customs system, lax in itself, had proved unable to deal with foreign trade. It will be remembered that, prior to 1842, there had been no regular commercial intercourse except at Canton.¹ Certain methods had been devised, there, of meeting the exceptional circumstances; but the Chinese Customs at other ports had had practically to deal only with the

¹ The Russian Caravan trade across Siberia may be excepted. But the conditions of this trade were exceptional, and the Russo-Chinese treaties of 1687, 1727, and 1768 materially different, in many respects, from the modern type.

native coasting trade ; and the Chinese system of administration admitted great laxity in the collection of dues. The underlying conception seems to have been that commodities should pay duties amounting roughly to 10 per cent. before entering into consumption ; about 3 per cent. being usually charged at the port of shipment, and 7 per cent. at the port of entry. But there seems to have been, practically, no system of accountability. Recognizing, no doubt, the impossibility of exacting precision, the Imperial Government had compounded, at some antecedent period, for a fixed tribute from each port or Customs district ; and the Provincial Governments seem to have followed the example.

Under the decentralized system prevailing in China, each Provincial Government has practically to raise its own revenue and meet its own expenditure. The Mandarins responsible for the administration of each given maritime district had, therefore, to supply two fixed quota—one for the Imperial, the other for the Provincial Exchequer ; but, when those requirements had been met, they were under no obligation to account for the remainder of their collections. The revenue appears to have suffered, under this system, more than the individual trader. For there *was* a nominal tariff, and there was enough law to enable the trader to resist extortion ; while the actual yield, at each station, was so far in excess of the fixed contribution that there was room

for composition, speculation, and much individual emolument, within the lawful limitations of the tariff.

But a system which worked smoothly enough, in a way, so long as only Chinese traders and Chinese junks were concerned, was quite unfitted to cope with the larger scale and rougher character of foreign trade. Moved, no doubt, by a knowledge of the difficulty which the Chinese Government would experience in this respect, and by a desire to make it manifest that we respected its treaty rights and wished to discountenance all attempts to deprive it of its dues, Sir Henry Pottinger inserted in the Treaty of Nanking a clause throwing a large measure of responsibility in respect to their collection, upon British officials. Article II. of that Treaty provided that the Queen should "appoint superintendents or Consular officers to reside at" the newly opened ports, "to be the medium of communication between the Chinese authorities and the British merchants, and to see that the just duties and other dues of the Chinese Government are duly discharged by H.B.M.'s subjects." Owing, no doubt, to the utter incapacity of the native Customs to deal with the new conditions, the Consuls seem to have found the only way of carrying out this provision was to undertake the collection of the duties themselves; handing over the amount to the local Superintendents of Customs.

This plan might have worked well enough if English Consuls and English merchants only had

been concerned ; but France and the United States entered into treaty relations with China in 1844, and their treaties contained no similar provision. Their Consuls took, therefore, no similar part in the collection, and the laxity of the Chinese system was soon found to admit of grave irregularities, which placed British merchants at an obvious disadvantage, and encouraged the less scrupulous to evade duties whose strict payment constituted a handicap so long as others escaped. The only way out of the dilemma was for the British Government to withhold the assistance hitherto afforded by its Consuls, throwing upon the Chinese Government the responsibility of collecting its own revenue ; and a decision to that effect was communicated by Lord Palmerston to Sir George Bonham on the 24th May, 1851.¹ This was followed by an Order in Council, dated 13th June, 1853, for the Government of British subjects in China, which gave H.M. Consuls certain powers to enforce Customs Regulations. But before that order could be put in operation the Triad Rebels had captured Shanghai, and the confusion which had already ensued upon the withdrawal of Consular help became worse confounded. Left to their own resources the Chinese had proved, as Sir Henry Pottinger foresaw, incapable of grappling with the situation ; and the new element of disturbance upset what semblance of authority remained. The Au-

¹ Correspondence, &c. respecting Consular interference for the prevention of Smuggling in China ; presented to both Houses of Parliament in 1857.

thorities, to quote a Memorandum ¹ by Mr. (now Sir Robert) Hart, had been driven from their yamêns and their power all but paralyzed. The import and export trade of the place went on much as usual ; but the collection of duties, if not altogether in abeyance, had passed from their hands. "Ships constantly left the port on whose cargoes not a farthing of duties had been paid, in return for whose clearances Consuls had obtained bonds or promissory notes of questionable validity," inasmuch as many were found to contend that the Chinese officials had no longer any right to tax trade at a port over which they had lost control ; and it seemed likely that the Government would altogether lose an important revenue, at a time when the pressure for funds was exceptionally felt.

To remedy this state of things, a conference was held on the 29th of June, 1854, between Woo, Taotai of Shanghai, and Messrs. Alcock (British), Murphy (U.S.), and Edan (French), Consuls. It being admitted, *pro formâ*, that a chief difficulty hitherto had been the want of qualified Customs officers with a knowledge of foreign languages, the remedy which suggested itself was the introduction of a foreign element into the service. It was agreed, therefore, that the Taotai should appoint one or more foreigners of undoubted probity and position, to act as Inspectors of Customs, together with a mixed staff of foreigners and Chinese as

¹ China, No. 1 (1865) Foreign Customs Establishment in China.

subordinates. In pursuance of this plan, it was agreed, further, that the consular representative of each power should nominate for the Taotai's approval one Inspector; the three to form a Board, who should proceed to organize a service upon the lines indicated. The Consuls undertook to examine any charge of exaction or neglect of duty that might be brought against the Inspectors; and if the accusation appeared reasonable, the case was to be formally tried before the Taotai and the three Consuls. But the Inspectors were not to be liable to dismissal by any other action, unless a total change of system were devised. The theory would seem to have been, in fact, that the foreign Consuls, instead of assisting in the collection of duties themselves, selected foreign assistants, who exercised their duties as representatives of the Chinese authority. The first British Inspector was Mr. (now Sir Thomas) Wade, who was then H.M. Vice-Consul at Shanghai. He resigned in 1855, and was succeeded by Mr. H. N. Lay, who was then acting as Vice-Consul and Interpreter. Soon after, the French and U.S. Consuls ceased to nominate representatives, and Mr. Lay became sole Inspector.

In its origin, therefore, and in respect of the objects it chiefly contemplated, the Foreign Inspectorate had at the outset a foreign character. It was, as Sir Robert Hart remarks, "a foreign Governmental measure, and did not originate with the Chinese authorities. Its rules and practice were at first of the simplest kind. It clashed,

nevertheless, with the aims of some who had availed themselves of the absence of such an institution to take advantage of the helplessness of the native officials," and it encountered, therefore, a measure of opposition. But it afforded such an obvious remedy for a situation which had become well-nigh intolerable, and met such an obvious need that its success was, from the first, practically assured. To quote the language of a despatch dated October 26th, 1860, from Mr. Bruce to Lord John Russell, reviewing and explaining the circumstances of its inauguration,—

"The records of the F.O. prove that for several years after the opening of Shanghai to trade, a system of smuggling and of compromising duties prevailed to an extent that destroyed, practically, the value of a fixed tariff. H.M.'s Consuls omitted no effort to collect from their nationals; imposed fines, gave notice of lax proceedings; but succeeded in effecting no improvement in the system, while they incurred much odium among their countrymen by inflicting penalties for acts which it was notorious the citizens of other countries were committing every day. The abuses at length attained such a height that the Chinese were unable to check them" [and asked assistance of the Consuls]. . . . "The good effects of the energy and honesty thus imported into the administration by the new system soon made themselves felt. In one year the revenue doubled itself, and has since shown a steady progress in proportion to the increase of trade. The returns in the year 1859 amounted to Tls. 2,902,377," exclusive of revenue from opium. Nor was the increase of revenue the only benefit. "The partial levy of duties, and the capricious enforcement of regulations which fell so heavily on the British merchant, no longer exist, and the Custom House now weighs equally upon all. To show your Lordship that this change has been effected without having recourse to any very great severity, I may mention that in the six years during which the inspectorship lasted, there were

only eighteen cases of fine and confiscation, amounting in all to the value of Tls. 20,000."

But though the foundation of a better system had been evolved at Shanghai, the old methods still prevailed at other Treaty ports; and it may not be out of place to describe what those methods were, in Sir Robert Hart's own words :—

"Official laxity has fostered official dishonesty, and hand-in-hand with it stalks individual rapacity. The aim of the Executive has been to get as much from the merchant, and to report as little to the head of the department, as possible; and conversely, the interest of the merchant has naturally been to pay the least possible amount by making as good a bargain for himself as the official's commingled avarice and fear would allow of. Operations pass through so many hands, and the standing of the parties dealt with differs so continually, that the necessary result is to keep the higher offices in utter ignorance of the real value of this branch of national revenue; on the official side, as regards totals, each one looks to the dexterity of his manipulations for support in his unsalaried, or more properly speaking, to-be-by-him-paid-for position, and on the other hand, in respect of individual transactions, each trader, in his own defence, has constantly to beat down or evade the official demands, and if not able to gain better terms than, at least to secure equality with, his neighbour.

"What precedes applies to the ports of China, whether frequented by foreigners or not. For greater clearness, and as being more strikingly illustrative of official practice, reference may be made to the routine of the Canton Customs a few years ago, where the office is presided over by a high official specially appointed by the Emperor, and known by foreigners as the Hoppo.

"For the collection of duties on foreign trade, the Canton Executive was a staff of middlemen, styled linguists, who bought their positions, and drew no official pay for their services. Merchants who had cargo to pass at the Customs made their bargains with the linguists, whose association with foreigners occasionally necessitated the substitution of competition for combination, and

they in turn made their arrangements with the Hoppo's non-official deputy, who, as confidential manager, repaired every day to one of the jetties to 'examine cargo.' The deputy in turn made his report to the recording clerks in the *yamun*, taking care to deduct the percentage to be put aside for the private purses of himself, his master, his master's friends, the people in the *yamun*, the Governor-General through whom the reports are forwarded to the Board, and the clerks and officials connected with the Board of Revenue itself. Thus cargo which, for instance, by tariff ought to have paid 1000 taels as duty, the linguist agreed to pass for 800; the deputy, informed by the linguist that the merchant had only paid 750, arranged to free the goods for 700; and then, making deductions for the *yamun* amounting, say, to 200 taels, directed the recording clerks to enter in the books such an amount of the description of the goods in question as ought to have paid 500 taels, the sum with which the Government was credited. To state the cost of collection under such a system at 100 per cent. would be rather below than above the mark.

"While Government got thus but a moiety of the revenue leviable under the tariff, and that moiety but a portion of what had actually been received from merchants, and paid for the collection at a rate extravagantly high, the officials and retainers through whose hands the money passed increased in riches, and became adepts in craft, and reckless in dishonesty. Under such circumstances, the duties payable must have varied constantly. The degree of success obtained in driving a bargain with a linguist became a question of superior skill, and the amounts paid by merchants, or reported to Government, must have depended on a thousand circumstances that would have baffled the calculations of the most experienced.

"At the other ports open to foreign trade, the procedure, though not identical, has been similar; the higher departments systematically kept in official ignorance, known dishonesty connived at, and the transactions of commerce at least inconvenienced by the uncertainty that attended a bargain system."

It is scarcely surprising that, with the result of the Shanghai experiment before them, the English and Chinese Plenipotentiaries should have agreed,

when negotiating the treaty of Tientsin, to extend the new organization to all the ports open to foreign trade. The Chinese had quickly noted the honesty of their foreign employés and the daily increasing revenue which ensued from their services. Lord Clarendon had been emphatic in his instructions that H.M.'s Consuls were to have nothing more to do with the collection of Chinese revenue; and Lord Elgin, holding it as an axiom that "smuggling was a great moral evil," was satisfied that "the general interests of trade do not suffer from the regular levy of moderate duties, although a loose system may sometimes swell the gains of individuals."¹ It was provided accordingly, in Art. 46 of the new treaty, that "the Chinese authorities at each port should adopt the means they might judge most proper to prevent the revenue suffering from fraud or smuggling," and by Clause X. of the annexed rules (equally signed by the Plenipotentiaries) "that one uniform system should be enforced at every port; . . . the high officer appointed by the Chinese Government to superintend foreign trade, . . . to be at liberty, of his own choice, and independently of the suggestion or nomination of any British authority, to select any British subject he may think fit, to aid him in the administration of the Customs Revenue, in the prevention of smuggling," etc. And by the

¹ Lord Elgin to Mr. Layard, February 8th, 1862. Further papers relating to the Rebellion in China, with an appendix. Presented to Parliament in 1863.

Convention of Peking, two years later, the new machinery was utilized to provide for the regular payment of the indemnities, which China undertook to "pay by instalments, viz., at Tientsin, on or before November 30th, the sum of Tls. 500,000; at Canton, on or before December 1st, Tls. 333,333; . . . and the remainder at the ports open to foreign trade in quarterly payments, which shall consist of one-fifth of the gross revenue from Customs there collected;" the moneys to be paid into the hands of an officer whom H.B.M.'s representative should specially appoint to receive them.

The new system differed from that originally invented at Shanghai, in that the foreigners employed were no longer recommended by the foreign Consuls. "It has now," wrote Mr. Bruce, in the despatch already quoted, "become a purely Chinese service, and the position of the foreigners employed in it differs in nothing from that of foreigners employed, for instance, in Egypt and other parts of the Levant. The Chinese Government is responsible for any abusive act they may commit in the discharge of their duties; and is at liberty to discharge them so long as there is no violation of the contract under which they are engaged. I may add that it is to this system that we must mainly look for the recovery of indemnities, and for the successful carrying out of the important experiment of Chinese emigration."

It is not to be supposed that a change so great as that implied in transition from a system of great

laxity to one of precision was accomplished without some friction. Merchants chafed at the additional trouble, to say nothing of the increased payments, entailed by the new system; while the minor Chinese officials resented a change which deprived them of a lucrative source of income.¹ The inconvenience was aggravated, too, by the inevitable employment, at first, of inexperienced foreigners who had an imperfect conception of their duties, and failed in the discretion as well as in the tact that were needed to facilitate the working of a new system. There were complaints and antagonism, therefore, at first; but these gradually subsided as the service became better organized, and the Imperial Chinese Maritime Customs is now recognized as one of the most efficient and liberally-managed services in existence. It is carried on with a minimum of inconvenience to all concerned, and none are more fully convinced of its advantages than the Chinese Government which has been placed, by its means, in possession of a great and assured revenue that has risen during its existence from Tls. 8,500,000 to close on 22,000,000 Haekwan taels, amounting, at the present rate of exchange, to nearly 4,000,000*l*.²

The conversion of silver into gold denominational values, however, though useful for purposes of illus-

¹ Memo. by Sir Robert Hart, *ut supra*.

² A statement of tonnage dues, import and export duty, paid by British vessels at Shanghai in 1848, transmitted by Sir R. Alcock (then Consul), shows a total of \$642,144 = at 4*s*. 6*d*., 144,482*l*.

tration, is entirely misleading from the point of view of Chinese finance, for the reason that the Haekwan tael is worth approximately as much in China as it was in 1863, though it will exchange into less than half the amount of English currency that it would purchase thirty years ago. The following table, showing the progressive augmentation of the revenue in Chinese currency, gives, therefore, a more truthful impression than could be attained by translation into sterling figures :—

1863.	1864.	1874.	1884.	1893.
H. Tls.	H. Tls.	H. Tls.	H. Tls.	H. Tls.
8,509,527	7,872,257	11,497,272	13,510,712	21,989,300

The increase results, in a measure, from the inclusion of new sources of revenue which were either non-existent, or collected otherwise, in the earlier years. The jump, for instance, of more than eight millions from 1884 to 1893 is largely due to the inclusion, in the latter period, of nearly five millions and a half on account of opium lekin which had been collected, previously, by the native excise. A certain proportion, also, is doubtless due to the diversion of coast and river traffic from junks, which entered at the Chinese Customs, to steamers which enter at the Foreign Customs. But the residuum must be ascribed to the natural growth of trade; and the total result is a testimony to the efficiency of a service which succeeds in collecting this great revenue under peculiar conditions, with an admitted minimum of inconvenience or friction. The results are tabulated every year in a series of

Returns that have taken deserved rank as models of lucidity and exhaustive information ; and the results are collated in a statistical department which issues, in turn, a concise summary and report on the whole course of foreign trade.

The work is carried on, under the Inspector-General, by a staff of thirty commissioners, twelve deputy commissioners, and 132 assistants, besides clerks and others who bring up the indoor staff to 206. The outdoor staff comprises 415 tide surveyors, examiners, tide-waiters, &c. There are six armed revenue cruisers, commanded by Europeans, but manned by Chinese, besides a number of armed launches. The entire service employs about 753 foreigners and 3540 Chinese, or a grand total of 4293. The annual cost is about 400,000*l.* a year, while the revenue collected in 1893 amounted, as we have seen, to close on 4,000,000*l.*

It is important to note also that the harbours and lighthouses are under the same control. Art. XXIX. of the treaty of Tientsin provides that "British merchant vessels shall be charged tonnage dues" at stated rates ; and Art. XXXII. stipulates that "the Consuls and Superintendents of Customs shall consult together regarding the erection of beacons or lighthouses, and the distribution of buoys and lightships, as occasion may demand." But some years elapsed before any action was taken ; the initiative and control having, as a matter of fact, been left to the Inspector-General of Customs, who eventually

created a department *ad hoc*, and who may point with gratification to the results that have been achieved. In 1858 there were practically no lights in Chinese waters, nor was it till some ten years after that date that a beginning was made. But by 1883 there had been placed seventy-three lights, four lightships, fifty-four buoys and fifty beacons. And these numbers have increased, in the subsequent ten years, to a hundred and eight lights on the coast and rivers (including twenty-three on the Canton river and forty-one on the Yangtze), eighty-nine buoys, and sixty-seven beacons, the number of lightships remaining the same. It may be added that an additional first-class dioptric light, which will be the most powerful in China, is about being sent out for erection on the Haeshan Islands, and a first-class "Siren" has just been erected on the Shantung Promontory.

It is equally germane to our purpose to note the various extraneous services that have been rendered by the Department, and by individual members, as tending to show that the Chinese Government is not inherently averse to its extension. The organization of Customs stations at Lungchow and Mengtze, on the frontiers of Kwangse and Yunnan, and at Yatung on the frontier of Sikkim, in pursuance respectively of the treaties with France regarding Tongking, and with British India regarding trade with Thibet, may be held perhaps to come, indirectly, within the functions of a Customs service. But by no stretch of conception can the conduct of diplomatic

negotiations be so included. Yet it was a member of the Customs service, Mr. J. D. Campbell, who negotiated, with Mr. Billot, preliminaries of peace after the Franco-Chinese war; and another member of that service, Mr. James Hart, who was commissioned to arrange terms of intercourse between India and Thibet, after successive Chinese Amban had exhausted the patience of the Calcutta Government, and provoked more than one collision on the Himalayan crest. The delimitation of political frontiers, again, can hardly be considered incidental to the collection of maritime dues. Yet members of the Customs service have taken a prominent part in delimiting the frontier between China and Tongking. It was Sir Robert Hart, as we have already seen, who was entrusted with the organization and the selection of professors for the Tungwen College; and it is to the Customs service that the task has been delegated, of preparing collections for the various international exhibitions at which China has been represented. The fact that high civil rank and distinction have been conferred upon several of its members may be taken to prove that all this work is appreciated; and it is surely not inconceivable that a service which comprises able and experienced men, who are at once Chinese scholars and in touch with Chinese ideas, may furnish a model, even if not a nucleus, of a reformed system of Imperial finance.

RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL.

CHAPTER X.

ANTAGONISM TO MISSIONARIES.

AFTER a period of comparative tranquillity, during which people had begun to think our relations with the Chinese were becoming more sympathetic, we were startled, during the summer of 1891, by a fresh outbreak of hostility. One mission-station after another was menaced, ransacked, or destroyed, from Ichang to Nanking, throughout the length of the Yangtze valley. Laymen were not treated with benevolence, inasmuch as bayonets had to be employed at more than one place, to fend off the mob; but it was against missions that the attacks were originally directed, and against missionaries that the libels by which the rioters were excited were levelled.

Persecution is no new thing, unhappily, in China. Tolerant and easy-going up to a certain point, the Chinese admitted the propaganda for a time, under the large interpretation of the early Jesuits. They might possibly have ended by accepting Christianity,

as they had accepted Buddhism, if it would have absorbed the cult which constitutes the key-stone of their polity; but the condemnation of Ancestor Worship sounded the knell of the edifice which Ricci had founded; the very claim of the Pope to interfere angering them not less, probably, than the dogma asserted. A foothold was kept: one of the churches burnt down in 1891 is said to have been ministered in by Ricci himself, and Huc showed us Christian congregations, fifty years ago, in Szechuen. But the proselytes have been subject to periodic molestation—with the sanction, at times, of the Imperial authorities, at others by merely local instigation. The treaties of Tientsin finally legalized the propaganda. The era of official persecution was then closed; but persecution has gone on, all the same, under the auspices of the *litterati*; and a retrospective glance over the years that have intervened may help us to appreciate more clearly the conditions of recent outbreaks.

Events of paramount importance crowd so quickly upon each other, nearer home, that many of us have probably forgotten the “Tientsin Massacre” of 1870, in which twenty-one foreigners, besides many native converts, lost their lives. It will not be superfluous, however, to recall the circumstances; for not only are the causes which led up to it constantly at work, but the very details are reproduced, with variations, on the occasion of every successive riot. Four years previously it had fallen to my lot, as correspondent of the

Times, to strike a note of warning in the following terms :—¹

“A proclamation has been extensively posted throughout Hunan and in the adjacent provinces, denouncing their (the missionaries’) interference with established customs, and calling on all loyal subjects to rise and exterminate them. Beginning with a sweeping denunciation against foreigners generally, whose ‘specific character is half man, half beast,’ and who, allowed by the extreme kindness of the Emperor to trade at Canton, have penetrated into every part of the empire, . . . the writer goes on to direct the whole flood of his wrath against missionaries in the following terms :—

“‘Those who have come to propagate religion, enticing and deluding the ignorant masses, print and circulate depraved compositions, daring, by their deceptive extravagances, to set loose the established bonds of society, utterly regardless of all modesty. . . . Although the adherents of the religion worship only Jesus, yet, being divided into Catholic and Protestants, they are continually railing at each other. . . . Daughters in a family are not given in marriage, but retained for the disposition of the bishop, thus ignoring the matrimonial relation.’

“A hundred other enormities, some with a certain foundation in fact, others existing entirely in the writer’s imagination, are alleged against these teachers of a new creed; and, in conclusion, the village elders are exhorted to assemble the population, in order “‘That the offenders may be hurled beyond the seas, to take their place with the strange things of creation!’”

Two years later, in October 1868, an attack was made on some members of the China Inland Mission who had recently settled in Yangchow (famous as the city where Marco Polo once held office), in the Viceroyalty of the Two Kiang. To excite popular feeling against them, the favourite system of placarding had been employed. Their

¹ Shanghai correspondence of the *Times*, November 28, 1866.

teaching was condemned as subversive of reverence for ancestors. They were accused of kidnapping children and boiling them up for medicine, of abstracting the heart and liver from dead bodies, of administering to Chinamen drugs and philters which turned them into foreigners. As a natural consequence, the populace became excited. Representations to the Prefect proved futile; and the excitement rose to fever heat. A mob broke into the mission premises, maltreated the occupants, who escaped with difficulty, and made a bonfire of the contents.

Mr. Medhurst, then H.M.'s Consul at Shanghai, made prompt demand for reparation. He required that the Prefect and Magistrate who had neglected to afford protection should be degraded; that certain *literati* who were accused of instigating the riots should be punished; that Tls. 2000 should be paid as compensation for loss and injuries sustained; that the missionaries should be officially welcomed back; and that there should be erected, on the spot, a stone tablet narrating the circumstances of the riot, condemning it, and setting forth that foreigners have a right to visit the interior and to be treated with courtesy. To three of these demands no particular demur was made; but to the punishment of the *literati* and the erection of a stone tablet, Tseng Kwo-fan, who was then Viceroy of Nanking, opposed an emphatic refusal. Those were days when a vigorous policy was still considered wise, in dealing with Orientals;

and Sir Rutherford Alcock, who was then British Minister at Peking, authorized Mr. Medhurst to renew the demand with a naval squadron at his back.

I was enabled, by the hospitality of a friend, to take up my quarters at Chinkeang during the progress of negotiations, and we resolved to ride over, one day, to Yangchow; partly to see the city, but principally from curiosity to note how we should be received. Ponies were sent across the Yangtze in the ferry boat, and a brisk trot of about fifteen miles brought us, shortly after noon, to the opposite bank of the Grand Canal which runs directly under the city walls. We had met with perfect civility from the country people; nor did the passers-by who stopped to see us ferried over show any discourtesy, beyond the exclamation "Yang Kweitze" (foreign devil)—which was uttered as a note of comment, however, rather than of insult. Neither had we any difficulty in hiring sedan chairs, in which we started to visit various places of interest. But within the city our experience changed. Hitherto we had come in contact only with "the people." Inside the walls we met frequent *literati*; and nearly every one of these hissed out a Yang Ko (foreign dog) or other less complimentary epithet. We could scarcely expect politeness, however, in a city whose punishment was being required; and only as we emerged from some gardens which had been indicated as worth a visit, was any active hostility displayed. We met,

there, a well-dressed man who halted as we approached, and deliberately hurled a bundle of turnips, which he had procured apparently for the purpose, into the leading chair; pouring out, at the same time, a volley of the comprehensive abuse in which Orientals are adepts when they set themselves to the task. It was a good shot, but my friend made a good catch and returned the compliment. The first impulse was, naturally, to follow it up by castigating the offender; but discretion said we were two miles from our horses, and there would be a row that might end anywhere. The crowd was increasing; "Yang Kweitze" sounded from every direction, in a more ominous tone than on the canal bank; so, as we had seen all we cared about, we concluded to return quietly by the way we had come.

The chair-bearers apologized, explaining that the man was mad; but were not dissatisfied, probably, to get rid of their dangerous freight. Mr. Medhurst was interested, I think, in an experience which he would have considered it necessary to forbid if our purpose had been too distinctly announced; and expressed his conviction that, before a fortnight was over, the Yangchow *literati* would have adopted another tone. His assurance was verified. With the British squadron anchored off Nanking, the Viceroy conceded his demands, appointing two officials of rank to accompany him to Yangchow and hold an inquiry into the case. The result may be summed up in the following proclamation, which

was issued by the Commissioners at the close of their labours :—

Whereas we have received the instructions of their excellencies, the High Ministers for Foreign trade, Ma and Tseng, to adjust matters at Yangchow, we find that on August 22nd, 1868, evil-disposed persons excited the people of Yangchow to enter the house rented by the British subjects, Taylor and others, and violently assault and plunder the inmates, so as to lead to their eventual ejection from the premises, some of them in a seriously wounded condition ; and whereas the local authorities were clearly guilty of having neglected to avert the evil in the first instance,—it, therefore, became the duty of the high authorities, after clear examination into the circumstances, to order the degradation of the city officials, the condign punishment of the ringleaders, the grant of due compensation to the sufferers, the repair of the house, and the restoration of its former inmates.

All this having been done, as a matter of simple justice, it now becomes our further duty to issue a public proclamation ; and this proclamation is, therefore, issued for the purpose of making it clearly understood to all men, high and low, that British subjects possess the liberty to enter the land for the pursuit of their lawful purposes, under a treaty granted by His Most Gracious Majesty the Emperor ; and that anyone who presumes to insult or annoy such persons in any way shall meet with condign punishment. Local authorities everywhere, moreover, are to see that they extend due protection to British subjects who may have occasion to appeal to them for assistance or redress.

It remains only to add that the conditions were fairly carried out ; the only modification being the admission of wood instead of stone, as a vehicle for the prescribed record. Mr. Medhurst took with him to Yangchow an escort of 400 marines and blue jackets, who remained during his stay ; and there were, by the time it was all over, few people in Yangchow who were unaware of the reparation that

had been exacted. One cause for regret remained. It was found impossible to implicate certain gentry and retired officials living in the neighbourhood, who were alleged by public rumour to have been the main instigators of the riot. These men were so powerful—far more so than the local officials—that it would have been more than any Chinaman's life was worth to give evidence against them; and this feature of the case is worth remembering, as it may cast light on subsequent troubles.

This proved to be only the first among a series of riots that culminated in the outbreak at Tientsin, when the French Consul and several French subjects, besides priests, sisters of mercy, and many native inmates of the mission premises, were massacred. The excitement had been wrought up in the same way. Placards had been posted, alleging the usual accusations of kidnapping children for the purpose of using their eyes, breasts, and other parts of the body as medicine; and an alleged kidnapper was brought forward as proof positive that the charges were true. At Chungking, as at Yangchow, in Kweichow and Anhwei, as in Kiang-peh and Pe-chili, there had been riots and demonstrations; and the then French minister, M. de Rochehouart, had only recently completed a tour having for its object to exact indemnities for the harm that had been done. Then, as in 1891, a connected purpose was traced, and common report went so far as to fix on a man named Chen Kwo-jui as the disturbing spirit who

had fired the train. From Szechuen to Nanking, and up the Grand Canal to Tientsin, where he was alleged to have been the guest of the Governor and to have led the rioters in person, this man had, it was said, travelled, prompting violence as he passed. Then, as in 1891, a wave of alarm ran through the Treaty ports, and grave apprehensions were entertained for the safety of all outlying missions. Happily, however, the force of the movement seemed to expend itself with that final convulsion. Placards inciting and threatening hostile outbreaks were posted in various other cities; but the excitement gradually subsided. Certain terms of reparation, including the despatch of Chunghow on a mission of apology to Paris, were exacted, and matters gradually resumed their normal aspect. There were exhibitions, occasionally, of local enmity, acts even of occasional violence, but many years passed by without any like demonstration of widespread hostility and irritation.

Twenty-one years later, however, found us in presence of a crisis remarkably similar, originating with proclamations emanating from the same reactionary centre. The stock stories of stealing children and taking out their eyes to use for medicine, of the vilest immorality, of preaching tenets subversive of social order, were disseminated broadcast. What was new was the rumour of political conspiracy, which was adduced in explanation of the gravity and the synchronism of the outbreaks.

Wuhu, a town on the Yangtze, fifty miles above Nanking, enjoys the distinction of having opened the ball. On the evening of the 10th of May, 1891, when two nuns attached to the Roman Catholic mission were making their way home from a visit to a sick convert, they were suddenly seized and carried before a petty official, on the charge of having bewitched two children and rendered them dumb. Influence was exerted to procure their release; and the Chinese magistrate, with a wisdom worthy of King Solomon, decided that they should be set at liberty as soon as the spell was removed. Naturally, before twenty-four hours had elapsed, the children became tired of obeying orders—and spoke! Such a tame conclusion, however, did not suit the views of those who had the business in hand. Two days later, a woman presented herself before the mission, accompanied by a score of ill-looking fellows, and, screaming as a Chinese woman can scream, claimed her child whom the missionaries had stolen, as they had stolen others whose corpses were within the walls of the establishment! This succeeded. A mob rapidly assembled, and broke into the mission premises. The graves in the enclosure were opened, and the bodies of those who were buried shown as proof of foul play. They were clearly those of Chinamen who had been cut up by the foreigners! and the mob thereupon cried out to destroy the premises, which were looted and burnt. Some adjacent houses were set on fire, and an attack on the

Custom House was repulsed only by the determined resistance of the Staff. The mob remained in charge for three days, but was eventually dispersed by the fortuitous arrival of three Chinese gunboats escorting a Mandarin to his seat of government in the adjacent province.

A fortnight after Wuhu came the turn of Nanking; and so deliberate were the preparations that the officials are said to have warned the missionaries of the very date of intended attack. The women and children accordingly withdrew, and were allowed to get safely away; but the American Methodist Mission premises were destroyed. Up and down the Yangtze valley, explosion now followed explosion under similar conditions. At Tanyang, not far from Chinkeang, a mob burned down an old church which had survived even the seventeenth-century persecution, pillaged and burned the mission buildings, desecrated the cemetery, and offered violence to the local Mandarin when he showed a will to interfere. A few days later, the Jesuit mission at Woosih, in the same neighbourhood, was attacked and destroyed. An impending riot at Kiukiang, on the 7th of June, was nipped in the bud by the determined bearing of less than a dozen foreign residents, who formed into line, charged the mob, and drove them out of the foreign settlement; after which Chinese soldiers took charge of the approaches.

Briefly, there were riots and disturbances, of more or less importance, during a period of a few

weeks, at Chinkeang, Nanking, Nganking (the capital of Anhwei), Woosih, Wuhu, Tanyang, Wuchow, Yangchow, Kiukiang, Wusüeh, and Ichang. Even Shanghai, with its considerable foreign population, was at one time threatened, and an attack upon the great Jesuit establishment at Sikawei, in the vicinity, apprehended. But Shanghai, how tempting soever an object of plunder, is not a tempting object of attack: the Foreign volunteer force is too considerable, and the prospects of opposition are too keen. The same thing, with the same result, had occurred in 1870. Prompt organization for defence averted danger, and confidence was quickly restored.

At Wusüeh alone, happily, was life lost; but the experiences of the actors in that tragedy almost equalled some of the tales of the Indian Mutiny in dramatic interest. On the evening of the 5th of June, a Chinese convert entered the city gate carrying four children destined for the Roman Catholic orphanage. Conspirators appear to have seized the opportunity to collect a mob. The man was hurried off to the nearest magistrate; and, despite the latter's remonstrance that the matter did not concern that establishment, rioters attacked, burned, and gutted the Wesleyan Mission. It chanced that the missionaries themselves were away on tour: only ladies and children remaining on the premises. There were, in fact, only two foreign men in Wusüeh—Messrs. Argent and Green, one a missionary, the other a

Customs officer, both Englishmen—and both were murdered while trying, like brave men, to make their way to the help of their countrywomen. Mrs. Warren and Mrs. Boden may best tell the tale¹ of their own experiences :—

“ The mob broke into the front gate and attacked us with long poles. We escaped through the back door, and made our way to the main street ; while we were going there Mrs. Protheroe got separated from us. Mr. Fân, our native teacher, stuck to us as long as he could. We got to the residence of the Makow-sze (a small official) and got inside, but were turned out, the people striking and hurting us. We made our way a little up the street, when Mrs. Warren with Mrs. Protheroe's child in her arms was knocked down by a pole. She managed, however, to get up, and pick up the child. The mob turned us back and made us go down the street ; but in that direction we were hemmed. Mrs. Boden, Mrs. Warren, with the child she was carrying, and the Amah turned down a small alley, and thus got separated from Fân and Chu and from Mrs. Boden's baby. We went into a small mat-shed hut, and sat on the bed for an hour. The people in the hut put out nearly all the lights, and gave us refuge. The Amah went out to look for Mrs. Boden's baby after we had been in the hut nearly an hour. Chu's brother found us, and then he fetched his brother and native clothes for us, and took us to the Urh Fu's (prefect's) residence, where we found Mrs. Protheroe and her baby.”

And here is Mrs. Protheroe's account of her experience in the interval :—

“ After I was separated from Mrs. Boden a perfect stranger took me to where he said the other foreigners were, namely, to the Makow-sze, when I was refused admittance. I got in and was turned out. The mob got me back in front of our premises, which were now on fire, and told me they were going to kill me,

¹ “ China ” ; No. 3 of 1891. Correspondence respecting Anti-Foreign Riots in China.

and tried to pull the baby out of my arms. They pulled my hair and slapped my face, and asked me where the men (the missionaries) were. I told them at Hankow and Ki-chiao. One man said, 'Don't kill her'; the others said, 'If we don't kill her we will beat her.' Then they dragged me through the street. A soldier in plain clothes, under pretence of robbing me of my ring, got me gradually to the Prefect's Yamên. I was a long time before I was let in. While waiting I was being beaten; but the man who had dragged me through the street to the Yamên then told the mob to desist from beating me. Fân, meanwhile, was being badly beaten, and somehow lost the baby, which the Amah found with a native woman, who gave it to her."

But if one official disgraced himself by driving away the women and children from his door, another, the Lung Ping-sze, did his utmost with the means at his command to check the riot. It was he who tried to dissuade the mob from their purpose at the outset. He appealed to the Prefect for help when they persisted, and was badly hurt in trying to save the lives of those who were killed. There was something pathetic in his message to the British Consul at Hankow that "he did his best, but that he is only a small Mandarin, and has but a few men; that he had urged the Prefect twice to send men to quell the riot, but the latter refused." Yet this man was removed from office; and, though he is said to have been reinstated through the intervention of the foreign Ministers, the act could not but create an unfavourable impression. Still worse was the case at Ichang, where Hunan "braves" are said to have been actual rioters, and the officials stood by powerless or unwilling to interfere. The stories vary in detail; but the varia-

tion is chiefly in the behaviour of the magistrates, and in the degree of violence shown by the mobs.

Two questions will probably suggest themselves, after perusal of this retrospect. Can the Chinese possibly believe the accusations by which the excitement is wrought up? Is it true that political motives were at the bottom of the trouble, and that secret societies were concerned in promoting the turmoil?

We must conquer, at the outset, a tendency to consider everything from the standpoint of nineteenth century enlightenment and civilization. Absurd as these charges sound to us, no one in China seems to suspect that they are too outrageous for the Chinese. To take a single illustrative example: Dr. Daly, who is surgeon in a mission hospital at Ningpo, affirms that "it is a popular belief all over China that foreigners extract the eyes and other organs from the dead, to make medicine of." He has been himself accused of it; and "for months the belief was prevalent, over a large district, that he had extracted the liver and other organs from a patient who had died in hospital, healing up the flesh with miraculous medicine so as to leave no marks of the incision." Besides, are we ourselves so very far removed from a similar stage of folly? A glance at the chapter on magic and witchcraft in Mr. Lecky's history of the rise of Ritualism in Europe will remind us that it is not so long since beliefs equally absurd ranked as religious tenets, to question which was "heresy" and was denounced

as "infidelity" in Western Europe. Even in the spacious times of great Elizabeth, Bishop Jewell could seriously affirm, before the Queen, that "witches and sorcerers within these few years are marvellously increased within your Grace's realm. Your Grace's subjects pine away even unto the death; their colour fadeth, their flesh rotteth, their speech is benumbed, their senses are bereft." To believe that people could be done to death by sticking pins into a wax figure, and that old women could ride up chimneys on broomsticks, was as absurd as to believe that medicine can be made of children's eyes, or that certain powders could weaken men's intellects, or that paper men were cutting off the queues of the Emperor's lieges.¹

The Chinese are, in point of superstition, very much where we were in the sixteenth century. An explanation—or, if that word be too strong, a foundation—can, as we shall find in the next chapter, be found for almost every charge brought forward, either in some current superstitious belief or in some clerical practice which lends itself to misconception. Kidnapping children is, to the Chinese, a familiar crime. It is, therefore, not extraordinary that ear should be given to charges of child-stealing when preferred against missionaries whose proceedings appear, to the Celes-

¹ These rumours were propagated at Soochow in 1876, and drove the people wild with terror. They were attributed to a secret society called "Pah-sien-chiao," and were ascribed to a wish to create political turmoil.

tial, in many ways peculiar. We have only to remember that the education of children is one of the most powerful means of proselytism in the Roman Repertory, and that, in China as in Europe, that Church has established orphanages in which waifs and strays are collected, in order to realize the connection of the two ideas. The suggestion has been thrown out that the practice of extreme unction¹ and our habit of closing the eyes of the dead may have furnished the notion of extracting the eyes and brain. But it would probably be more exact to say that this slander, also, is an adaptation of a conception already present in the Chinese mind; for it is, I believe, a fact that such crimes were alleged to exist before a missionary had set foot in the country. Extreme openness, again, is characteristic of Chinese life. The temples and monasteries are open from daylight to dark; you can wander into every nook and corner. Official Yamêns are open: not only courts of justice, but the halls of audience. Can it surprise us if, to a people so accustomed, the practice of enclosure and seclusion seems suspicious?

Celibacy, both of men and women, is, to the Chinese, a familiar idea. Monks and nuns are

¹ Clause 7 of the Hunan proclamation of 1866 runs thus:—
“When a member of this religion is on his death-bed, several of his co-religionists come and exclude his relatives while they offer prayers for his salvation. The fact is, while the breath is still in his body they scoop out his eyes and cut out his heart, which they use in their country in the manufacture of false silver. . . .”

common among the northern Buddhists. But the former are held in small esteem, and the reputation of the nunneries is scarcely better than that which many such institutions had earned for themselves, in Europe, before the Reformation. There can be no great difficulty, therefore, in believing that the people are willing to judge celibate foreigners by the native standard. Fanaticism is rarely scrupulous about exaggerating the misdeeds of its enemies; and we can easily believe that here is another serious cause of "hatred to the foreigner among the masses of the Chinese people."

What is perhaps equally curious is that even those extravagant charges, like everything else in that crystallized empire, seem of long descent; having been formulated apparently for the purpose of earlier persecutions, and reproduced upon occasion by the *literati* of successive generations. Shortly after the massacre of Tientsin, certain American missionaries obtained possession, at a town in Shantung, of a Chinese book entitled "Death Blow to Corrupt Doctrine," which brought forward all the accusations against missionaries that had been the alleged motive of the outbreak. The book is said to have been written in 1862 by Tang Tze-shing, one of the highest officials in the province of Hupeh, and to have been founded, in its turn, on a similar book written by one Yang Kwang-sien which was, Du Halde tells us, the exciting cause of the persecution of Christians in 1624. Nor is the series at an end: similar

charges are to be found in a standard collection of important official documents which was republished, not many years ago, with the imprimatur of distinguished scholars and ex-officials.

Given those two forces—the enmity of the *literati* and the credulity of the populace—it is difficult to limit the results that may be worked out. For the hostility of Chinese *literati*, let us remember, to intruders who condemn the national cult, may be as genuine as the hostility of Christian priests to those who assail their religious belief. “When,” writes a Chinaman,¹ who came forward as an exponent of the opinion of his class,—“When the educated Chinese sees a mass of impenetrable darkness being thrust upon the people, with all the arrogant and aggressive pretentiousness of the missionaries on the one hand, and by the threat of gunboats on the part of foreign governments on the other, it makes him hate the foreigners with a hatred which only those can feel who see that all they hold as the highest and most sacred as belonging to them as a race and a nation—their light, their culture, and their literary refinement—are in danger of being irreparably defaced and destroyed.” The more conservative resent, he adds, with horror, the attacks on Confucianism and the Worship of Ancestors; while the more enlightened resent being lectured for pandering to

¹ A letter headed “*Defensio Populi ad Populos*,” published in the *North China Herald*, of July 24, 1891, which attracted much attention and controversy.

popular belief that eclipses are caused by a celestial dog eating the moon, in the same breath that they are asked to believe that the sun stood still at the bidding of Joshua. If we try to picture the reception that Buddhist missionaries would have met with in England, and the degree of credit that would have attached to accusations against them, in a society of which Sir Matthew Hale and Sir Thomas Browne¹ were representatives, we may be able to realize, in some degree, the feeling with which European missionaries are regarded by Chinese.

Still, to admit that the hatred exists is different from admitting that it is universal and ever-active; to admit that the accusations are believed, is different from admitting that the people would formulate them if left alone. Flax will not burn unless fire be applied. Riots would probably not occur without instigation; and, when we come to ask whence the instigation came, there is not wanting evidence of political intrigue.

In an interview with the Taotai of Hankow, shortly after the Wusüeh outrage, H.B.M. Consul (Mr. Gardner) asked point-blank whether there was any truth in the reports that these riots were caused

¹ Two women were hanged in Suffolk in 1664 for witchcraft, by sentence of Sir Matthew Hale, who declared that the reality of witchcraft was unquestionable; and Sir Thomas Browne, who was a great physician, as well as a great writer, swore at the trial that he was of opinion that the persons in question had been bewitched.—“Lecky’s History of Rationalism,” vol. i. chap. i.

by a Secret Society, whose motive was hostility to the Imperial Government. The Mandarins admitted that "there is a great deal of truth in it; but the actual rioters are generally local people, who are stirred up by these" agitators. Similarly, the present Chinese Minister in London, during an interview with Sir Philip Currie, said that "there had not for years been such an anti-foreign outbreak; that he did not attribute it to any widespread feeling against foreigners, but to the machination of Secret Societies existing among the disbanded soldiery, the object of which was to stir up trouble against the Government." What is perhaps stronger, because less interested evidence, is that the Viceroy of Nanking memorialized the Throne in the same terms, asking for increased powers to punish the culprits; and that an active crusade has, ever since, been carried on against the Society alleged to be concerned.

China is honeycombed by Secret Societies. They vary alike in their objects and their origin; but they are all viewed askance, because their organization may be directed at any moment against the governing powers.

There are other forces at work, however, besides a superstition and political intrigue; and a few words of explanation may perhaps afford a key to their nature. First and foremost, in all machinations against foreigners, must be noted the *literati*. It is one of the evils of the Chinese system that every educated man aspires to take a degree, but that

no career except the Government service exists for him after he has taken it. We find, therefore, instantly accounted for, a great army of men, saturated with prejudice and conceit engendered by the study of the native classics ; embarrassed often, discontented while waiting for the office that may never come, and prone to the mischief which is ever ready to the idle hand.

Neither need the remissness of the Officials be ascribed always and altogether to ill-will. Having attained office after a long period of waiting, and having borrowed freely to pay the fees incidental to its attainment, they are naturally anxious to retain it in order to recoup their outlay. And their best chance of retaining it is to keep order in their district. But there may be considerations more urgent than even the dissatisfaction of their superiors. If they run counter to the wishes of the *literati* and the gentry, these will certainly find means to subvert them ; and the fear of such an event may occasionally terrify them into acquiescence in plots which they really disapprove.

The threads of the outbreak of 1891 seem to centre in Hunan, a great and prosperous province lying south of the Yangtze, nearly opposite the treaty port of Hankow which is comprised within the same viceroyalty. The people of the Central Provinces, the purest descendants of the old dominant race, have the reputation of being amongst the bravest, as well as the most bigoted in China. It is largely from this region that the soldiery were

drawn who gained for the reigning dynasty the ascendancy over Taeping, Nienfei, and Mahomedan rebellions which shook it to its foundations after the Anglo-French campaigns of 1857-60. The Franco-Chinese war in Tongking followed, and it was Hunan again which supplied a great portion of the fighting men. Tseng Kwo-fan, the greatest Chinaman of his day, the father of the Marquis Tseng, was a Hunan man; his brother Tseng Kwo-chüan died not long ago in office as Viceroy of Nanking; Tso 'Tsung-tang, who crushed the Mahomedan rising in the North-west, and won back Chinese Turkestan, was a Hunanese, as was Liu Chin-tang, his most distinguished lieutenant. But Tso was dead, and the Tsengs were dead, and tens of thousands of their soldiers had been disbanded. Some went home; some were retained as provincial garrisons at various places throughout the empire; many took to loafing and discontent; but all, or nearly all, are said to belong to a Society called the "Kolao," which is alleged to have been the main-spring of the agitation. Tseng Kwo-chüan had, it was said, disbursed a large annual sum, partly in payment of superfluous troops, but indirectly as a bribe to this Society to refrain from troubling the peace. The new Viceroy, Liu Kun-yi, also a Hunan man—the fact that he was recalled from a long retirement may show the feeling that it was necessary to put a Hunanese who could be relied on at the post—accepted office on a policy of retrenchment, and declined to continue the blackmail.

Hunan, moreover, is conservative in politics as well as in religion. Its hatred of innovation extends to foreigners and all their ways, and it had signalized itself quite recently by repelling a party of workmen sent by the Viceroy to erect a line of telegraph poles across the province. It was in vain they pleaded Imperial orders. Over 1000 poles were burnt before their eyes, while the wire was put into an open boat and sent adrift upon the river. It is not incredible that a certain spirit of hostility to a dynasty which is introducing such foreign appliances may be mixed up with dislike to the stranger who brings them. Even the great Tseng family, of which the Hunanese are so justly proud, is said to have been treated with some coolness when, in the person of the Marquis Tseng, it was supposed to have imbibed progressive ideas; and the first Envoy to England, Kwo Sung-tao, who was also a Hunanese, met a decidedly cool reception on his return.

There are considerations, too—apart from ill-will—which may help to explain the reluctance of the Imperial Government to employ more force in repressing the disorders. Not in its armaments any more than in other respects is China like European nations. There were the beginnings of a standing army, in England, in the days of Charles II. It was not the royal troops, however, but Somerset and Devon militia, according to Mr. Blackmore, that were employed in attacking the Doones—with the result, too, even in their case, that Somerset and

Devon began shooting at one another, over the heads of the common enemy. There are Imperial troops at Peking—who would be as little likely, however, to go south as Charles the Second's Guards were likely to be sent to Devonshire; for the provinces still form, in China, so many administrative units within which Governors and Governors-General are practically supreme. The army of China has been said to consist of over a million of men; but the million is largely made up of provincial militia, designed for service against rebels or brigands in their own district. And upon these, and upon local levies, the Imperial Government seemed disposed to rely, from sheer dread of making matters worse; though many of the militia were probably members of the very Society which was said to be the chief agent in the turmoil. No two Chinese officials, probably, would agree in assessing the exact value to be attached to all those different considerations, or the precise extent to which they influence the Government on such occasions. But it will be admitted that they form constituent elements of the problem; and it will readily be inferred that the Government finds itself in a difficult position, between the menacing attitude of Europe on one hand, and apprehension of its unruly subjects on the other.

The occasion was taken, by the Foreign Ministers, to impress upon the Imperial Cabinet the necessity of a public utterance, asserting and defining the treaty rights of missionaries in the country; and

the Emperor's advisers persuaded him to issue the following edict:—

“ The Tsung-li Yamèn has memorialized us on the disturbances occurring in the various provinces against (foreign) religious orders, and requested us to order the Governor-General and Governors to take immediate measures for their suppression [etc.]. The memorialists stated that in the fourth moon the churches in Wuhu, in the province of Anhui, were burned down by evil-disposed persons, and the churches in Tanyang (Kiangsu) and in Wusueh (Hupeh) were successively destroyed, and it was urged that the leaders should be discovered and captured, and stringent preventive means should be taken [etc.]. That the several nations are at liberty to promulgate their religions (in China) is set forth in the treaties, and Imperial Decrees have been granted instructing the various provinces to give protection at all times. Many years have passed by, and the Chinese and foreigners have lived on friendly terms. How is it that lately churches have been burned and destroyed almost simultaneously? It is certainly strange and astounding. It is only too obvious that there must be among the evil-doers some notoriously desperate characters who secretly plan, dupe, spread rumours, and mislead the minds of the people with the expectation that an opportunity may occur for plunder. Even the peaceful and good people have been misguided by and forced to join these rogues to aid in creating more momentous results. Unless severe measures are devised to punish and suppress [these malefactors], how are the laws to be upheld, and how is the country to enjoy quiet? Let the Governor-General and Governors of Liang-kiang, Hukuang, Kiangsu, Anhui, and Hupeh at once command the civil and military officials to discover, capture, try, convict, and execute the leaders of the riots as a warning to others for the future. The religion of the Western countries simply admonishes people to become virtuous, and the native Converts are Chinese subjects under the jurisdiction of the local officials. The religions and peoples ought to exist peaceably side by side. The risings [against religious orders] no doubt took origin from the discontented class, who fabricate groundless rumours and create disturbance under false pretexts. Such cunning people are to be found in every place.

Let the Tartar-Generals, Governors-General, and Governors proclaim and notify the people never to listen lightly to floating rumours and recklessly cause troubles. Any writers of anonymous placards manufacturing rumours to mislead the people are to be apprehended and severely punished. The local officials must at all times devise measures for the protection of the lives and properties of the merchants and missionaries of the several nations, and must not permit criminals to harass and injure them. In case their precautions are not effectual and disturbances occur, let the high authorities report the exact state of the case and have such officials cashiered. Let the various cases [of riot against foreign churches] in the different provinces still pending settlement be promptly arranged by the Tartar-Generals, Governors-General, and Governors, who are not to allow the subordinate officials to delay and procrastinate through fear of difficulties. Let this Decree be known to all. Respect this ! ”

That the proclamation itself and its publication in the *Peking Gazette* were obtained with difficulty¹ does not detract from its intrinsic value as an utterance in favour of Christian religion and of foreign intercourse. What the Imperial Government seemed unwilling to realize was that Europe required something more than words, as an earnest of its goodwill in the crisis. Sir Halliday Macartney told the Foreign Office,² under instruction of course from Peking, that the Government felt “perplexed and somewhat disturbed by the pressure which continued to be put on them.” Two men had (they pleaded) been executed at Wuhu, and others subjected to minor punishments. Two more had since been condemned to death at Wusüeh for participation

¹ Sir J. Walsham to Lord Salisbury, June 21.

² Lord Salisbury to Sir J. Walsham, July 22, 1891.

in the riots there, and several mandarins had been degraded. "They felt, therefore, that there had been no laxity or evasion in the measures taken, and they apprehended that further executions would tend to increase rather than allay the popular excitement." The contention was plausible, from the Chinese point of view; but it ignored ulterior considerations which had forced themselves on the attention of European statesmen. The outbreaks had been so serious and widespread, and the authorities had shown such evident incapacity to grapple with them, that it had ceased to be a question merely of special reparation. It was no longer a question of this or that riot, but of a whole series of outbreaks, which the Imperial Government might plead difficulty in preventing, but which foreigners in China were persuaded the local authorities rarely used diligence to prevent. There was a conviction, as Mr. Gardner told the Taotai of Hankow, that these riots are largely due to "the remissness of the Chinese authorities in suppressing the dissemination of the abominable anti-Christian pamphlets and placards"; and there was felt, Sir Thomas Sanderson told Sir Halliday Macartney, to be "a growing tendency amongst the Chinese population to think that the simplest way of stopping any foreign movement or institution which they dislike is a resort to popular outbreak and violence, which they believe will have no unpleasant result to themselves, and will merely entail money payment of a certain pecuniary indemnity by their Government."

It would be unfair to suppose that the Chinese could say nothing in answer to these protests. Very shortly after the Tientsin massacre, they took occasion¹ to set out their case, with a view to asking that certain restrictions might be placed upon the action of missionaries, in matters which they alleged caused irritation and danger. They began by saying that "as regards trade there is no probability of Chinese and foreigners quarrelling, but as regards missions there is a great deal of ill-feeling"; and it may be not amiss to note one or two of the causes they allege. One point is that of extra-territorial privilege. Either prevent missionaries residing in the interior, or let them do so subject to Chinese law! Another charge is that "converts take advantage of the influence of the missionaries to injure and oppress the common people": and that when litigation arises "the missionaries support the latter, thus obstructing the authorities, which the people strongly object to." Roman bishops, again, have been accused of imitating the port and trappings of Provincial Governors, and an instance is given of a Roman bishop having a seal manufactured with which to stamp his proclamations. But these are minor matters compared with the alleged tendency to look on converts, if not as naturalized Frenchmen, as entitled at any rate to a quasi-consular protection. It is easy to understand that if a convert appeals to his priest, the priest's

¹ *Vide* China (Blue Book), No. 3 of 1871.

sympathies should be enlisted; but it is equally easy to comprehend the irritation that may be caused by an attempt to express those sympathies in official ears.

Another impression, which was not mentioned in this despatch, but is voiced by the Chinese exponent of the literate cause, is that missionaries constitute by their organization not only an *imperium in imperio*, but a hostile *imperium* in the sense that they are prepared to place influence and valuable information at the disposal of a foreign invader. "Tous les renseignements qui parvenaient au général. . . tant sur les ressources des provinces que nous allions traverser que sur les effectifs des troupes que nous allions rencontrer lui étaient procurés par l'intermédiaire des jésuites qui les faisaient relever par des Chinois à leur devotion." The language is used by a writer who held an official position in the French army during the war that ended with the treaty of Tientsin; and similar testimony has been given to the help yielded the French, by missionaries and their converts, during the invasion of Tongking.

It is difficult, no doubt, for high Chinese officials to appreciate the feeling in favour of missionary enterprise which prevails among a large section of the English people, and more difficult still for them to reconcile the attitude of France towards Clericalism at home with its willingness to support it in the East. But Sir Thomas Sanderson was undoubtedly right in impressing on the Chinese Minister

that, "if public opinion once became alarmed and indignant in France and England, a cry for intervention might arise that might have very serious consequences." It would be useless for the Chinese to retort "that our people object to the propaganda as much as your people desire it," because religious enthusiasm declines to admit argument. We shrink in horror from the doctrine of the Koran or the sword. Europe would not tolerate, now, a campaign against the Albigenses : even the most enthusiastic would recoil from a naked proposal to impose Christianity on any heathen nation by force of arms. But a volume of public opinion which has to be reckoned with does approve of compelling China to admit and protect missionaries, how distasteful soever their presence may be to certain classes of the population.

CHAPTER XI.

CAUSES OF ANTAGONISM.

It was currently predicted in China, after the events of 1891, that there would be a fresh series of riots during the ensuing year. The anticipation was, fortunately, not realized in so far as organized outbreak was concerned; but missionaries and their converts, both Catholic and Protestant, have been maltreated, from time to time, in provinces so far apart as Fohkien and Honan, Szechuen and Shense. They are accused of having caused drought in one place; the design of founding a station is rudely opposed in another; and the usual charges of mutilation and immorality have been current. In no case does there appear to be a suspicion of the political agitators who were accused of fomenting the riots in the Yangtze valley: the attacks seem to have been the outcome of sheer dislike and superstition. But their occurrence betrays the existence of a perpetual danger, and it is worth while examining more closely the forces at work within this ever-active volcano. The impression that the charges levelled

against missionaries in hostile placards and publications are the prevalently exciting cause is justifiable, no doubt, to a certain point; but it is, perhaps, open to question whether the very stress laid on those libels has not tended to mislead by creating a belief that, if the Chinese Government denounced them with sufficient earnestness, the enmity and the misconception might be extinguished together. A little deeper investigation of Chinese habits of thought may enable us to form a clearer conception of the facts.

It is necessary, at the outset, to appreciate three Chinese puns. Among the many sectarian differences which have led Chinamen to imagine that foreigners have so many different religions, those regarding the proper name for God hold prominent rank. English Protestants use Shang Te, while Americans have coined Chen Shen, and Romanists have invented Tien Chu, which means Heaven's Lord; neither being willing to admit that the Chinese expression Tien (Heaven) implies a personal God. And so, the Chinese for religion being "*kiau*," the term Tien Chu Kiau has come to express Roman Christianity. But there is, unfortunately, another word having the sound of *chu* which means "pig," and another word pronounced *kiau* which means "squeak"; so that the way of the satirist is clear for converting "Religion of the Lord of Heaven" into "Squeak of the Celestial Pig." A common term for foreigners, again, is Yang Jen, meaning Sea-Men,

or men from the sea; but there is another word having the sound *yang*, which means "goat." Caricatures of pigs and goats are used, therefore, to depict missionaries and their converts, while a means of vilifying Christianity by depicting it as hog-worship is readily suggested.

Caricatures, however, only excite ridicule. It requires something more serious to inspire the angry terror which finds expression in riot and maltreatment; and it may surprise us not a little to find that charges so extravagant that they might well seem, to an European, the outcome of malignant imagination, are really based on common superstitions, distorted and misapplied to the strange teachers of a stranger creed. Thus, a belief in the efficacy of human flesh for medicinal purposes is still prevalent in China, and lingers even in Japan, where a man who killed his wife in order to serve up her liver to his aged mother was sentenced, quite recently, to nine years' hard labour. To cut out and boil down a piece of one's own flesh into medicine for a sick parent is an act of the highest filial piety;¹ and though that may be dismissed as a delusion, from which only the actor suffers, it is otherwise with *materia* which can only be obtained by crime. Dr. MacGowan, a resident in China of nearly fifty years' standing, lately communicated to the *North-China Herald* a paper showing that

¹ So much so that Provincial Governors think it worth while to mention cases, occasionally, in reports to the Throne, and solicit honorific recognition which the Emperor usually accords.

thirty-seven portions of the human body are named in the best work on Chinese Materia Medica as valuable contributions to the pharmacopœia ! The gall bladder of a recently slain man, for example, mixed with other medicaments, is good for fever. The flesh of a prematurely born child possesses valuable tonic properties, and a grandfather was quite recently charged with procuring this revolting medicine for his son ! There was very nearly being a riot at Nanking, two years ago, because missionaries had given a youth a glass eye ; the inference obviously being that they had deprived him of the original optic. There was nearly being another, because some people who were looking round the Mission premises lost a child : it was only opportune news that it had found its way home which quieted the crowd. The eyes, ears, brain, viscera, &c., of all children possess valuable medicinal properties ; and though the crime of procuring them is punishable by the severest methods known to Chinese law, kidnappers and even midwives are said to find gain in supplying bodies for the unholy purpose. A case is reported in the *Peking Gazette* of Sept., 1873, where one of two kidnappers, who were caught red-handed, confessed to the pursuit. A certain man had provided him with a powder, lotion, sickle, and bamboo tube. " The powder was to be put into red dates and given small children to eat. They would then fall into a trance and follow me. I was to take them to a solitary place, scoop out the heart and eyes by

means of these implements, and rub them with the lotion to prevent decay," &c. It is hardly necessary to add that the men were promptly executed, and that such crimes are execrated by high and low, though morbid and superstitious invalids may be found willing to profit by them : what we are concerned with at the moment is to note their admitted existence. Neither is kidnapping confined to these rare and hideous cases. Children are stolen for sale to theatrical managers and to brothels ; so that we are here, again, in presence of a familiar crime. It was a belief that he had kidnapped a child which caused the attack on Dr. Greig, two years ago, in Manchuria ; and the suspicion was so far excusable, in his case, that the child was really seen following his cart, and had been really lost. I have known a child stand paralyzed with fear when I tried to make friends by offering it a small coin ; and though dread of the " foreign devil " might account for much, terror so excessive is more than likely to have been aggravated by tales of kidnapping.

We may be better able to comprehend, now, the origin and purport of the hideous charges of mutilation and degraded worship that find currency throughout the empire. The literature in which they are promulgated is of various kinds : placards, lampoons, and less ephemeral publications. A specimen is now before me, which has been republished with explanatory notes, under missionary auspices, in order to show how these superstitions

are pointed and fanned into flame. It consists, practically, of thirty-two cartoons, each with an appropriate legend. The first seven vilify Christianity by depicting it as Hog-Worship, and its teachers as guilty of atrocious crimes, while others are intended to suggest the fate that befits members of an abominable sect. The eucharist is evidently confounded with the administration of a charm which converts the recipient into an abject follower of the priest, just as a certain pill is believed to subject children to the influence of kidnappers. Other cartoons represent foreigners taking out the eyes of a corpse, the insinuation evidently being that the privacy exacted during the ceremony of extreme unction affords an opportunity for the outrage; while others depict hideous mutilations alleged to be perpetrated on the living¹—especially women and children—for the sake of obtaining material to make medicines, to mix with chemicals for photography, or to employ in the conversion of lead into silver! The worst records of clerical immorality in the Middle Ages are eclipsed by the insinuations of others. If it were not, indeed, for such precedents as are afforded by Roman ecclesiastical history, one might be tempted to reject as

¹ The attack on the China Inland Mission at Yang-chow, in 1869, is said to have been started by the folly of a medical missionary in putting a human foetus into a bottle and leaving it exposed to view. *Vide* "Missionaries in China." By A. Michie. Stamford & Co., 1892.

outrageous the supposition that such insinuations could find acceptance.¹

Nor is that all. Not only is it a question of outraging morality and perpetrating other hideous crimes, but of subverting the cult upon which the national polity is built up. Buddhism and Taoism may hold a large place in the national life, but Ancestor Worship is the supreme observance and ultimate law of the Chinese social organization. Hardly has the doctrine of transubstantiation been more keenly disputed among theologians in Europe, than the exact import and admissibility of Ancestor Worship by all classes of missionaries in China. The Churches have ended by damning it; and have earned, in doing so, the contempt, hatred, and undying opposition of the educated classes. When, therefore, we see pictures of foreigners being beaten and otherwise maltreated, and their books burned while Mandarins stand by holding their noses, it is not only because they are held guilty of these enormities, but because "they do not reverence heaven, earth, prince or parents," and because their books stink of a corrupt doctrine which inculcates neglect of the Ancestral temple. Ancestor worship expands from the family to the clan; and expulsion from the clan and from the district is indicated in

¹ *Vide* "Lecky's History of European Morals," cap. v., especially pp. 443-4.

The table of marriage restrictions (*re* relationship) is actually inverted, in one paragraph of the "Picture Gallery."

the case of obstinate renegades. A series of pictures follow, in which pigs and goats are being fattened with a view to slaughter at a bridal festival and for offerings at the Ancestral shrine. Hunan is the centre from which most of this literature emanates : it is the home of one Chou Han, to whom a leading part in its diffusion is ascribed : Hunan men, accordingly, take a leading part in these proceedings, and Mandarins supposed to personify Chou Han stand by approving the deeds of violence by which foreigners and their converts are pursued. In one picture Hunan braves, under the guise of tigers, are pouncing on pigs and goats. In another, pigs (missionaries) trying to penetrate a farmstead surrounded by a bamboo grove (representing Hunan) are being chased by dogs whom the watchful farmer lets loose. In another, foreigners carrying a hog to the temple of Confucius are repulsed from the portals with a scorn which implies that Confucianists reject the religion symbolized. Elsewhere, the God of Thunder is destroying those who deny his existence ; the Genius of Hunan is inspiring the destruction of pigs and goats ; a Taoist priest exterminates others by means of a magic pencil, from which he scatters vermilion drops ; the military power of China rises under the guise of a lion and slays the principal hog while the others scamper away. There is nothing new under the sun, not even spiritualism ; and we are invited, finally, to assume that the Hunanese have been consulting Spirits as to the

ultimate fate of the Chief Teacher and his followers. The tortures of a Chinese hell are a pictorial response which indicates a remarkable conformity in the impression of diverse peoples as to the appropriate fate of all who have the audacity to think differently from themselves. That fate is not, however, inevitable; for the final cartoon represents pigs and goats kneeling before the Chinese unicorn—a legendary beast whose appearance is supposed to presage good government—the idea being, of course, a general restoration of harmony by submission to the imperial *régime*.

It is not long in the life of a nation since the vast majority of English men and women believed that people could be done to death by sticking pins in a wax image, and could be subjected to untold misfortune by the glance of an evil eye. The popular dislike and misconception of Mahomedanism was then also at its height. If the Grand Turk had chosen that moment to flood England with Mahomedan missionaries, who insisted on buying land and building mosques wherever they chose, it is not inconceivable that the then current belief in sorcery and other strange crimes might have been directed against intruders who were bent on overthrowing the national creed. Nor, if emissaries from Ispahan had come to complicate the problem, is it likely that our ancestors would have distinguished much more exactly between Shiahs and Sunnis than the Chinese discriminate, at present, between the various sects which bewilder

them by rival claims to superior merit.¹ In a certain sense, no doubt, the Roman missions are disliked most, because their reclamations under the French treaty of 1860—on which we shall have occasion to dilate later on—were exceedingly irritating to both Mandarins and people. Roman establishments represent, too, in an exaggerated form, certain practices which are peculiarly obnoxious to popular dislike. Just, for instance, as some of the calumnies which scandalized even the dissolute Court of Imperial Rome are thought to have been fostered by the tendency to surround with a certain obscurity the more mysterious ceremonies of the Church, so the traditional practice of veiling ecclesiastical premises behind high walls may be responsible for a share of the suspicion prevalent in China, where similar (national) institutions are customarily open to the passer-by.² Given the existence of kidnapping as a notorious crime, and a belief that children's eyes and brains are good for medicine, it is easy to understand the suspicion that must be excited by a system of collecting children into orphanages, and by the

¹ Bitterly satirical as it is, Voltaire's dialogue between a Jesuit, a Jansenist, a Quaker, an Anglican, a Lutheran, a Puritan, a Mussulman, and a Jew—which the Chinaman terminates by ordering them all to be locked up in a lunatic asylum, in separate cells—scarcely overstates the case from the Chinese point of view.—“Dialogues,” vol. i. ch. xi.

² *Vide* Memorial by Tseng Kwo-fan, then Viceroy of Pechili, *China*, No. 1 of 1871.

enormous mortality which takes place among the little waifs. That children had been decoyed in, and done to death for the sake of their eyes, was one of the commonest cries raised against Mission stations during the late riots. Given a belief that kidnappers employ medicated food to entrance their victims, it is easy to conceive suspicion of the eucharist and of the attitude of implicit subjection which the Churches are wont to expect from their disciples.

Interference with the weather, again, is a common function of witchcraft; and if we remember that the Chinese are still at the stage of credulity from which Europe has not long emerged, we shall be less surprised to hear that people maddened by prolonged drought, and the prospect of consequent famines, should have maltreated¹ missionaries in the belief that they had been interfering with the rainfall. It is only two years since we heard of a monk exorcising a boy who had become possessed of a devil, in Bavaria, and declaring that the devil had told him it had been enabled to take possession through the maleficent arts of a certain Protestant woman! The woman was boycotted in consequence, and brought an action against the monk. Two Church authorities maintained, at the trial, that the belief that an individual could be "possessed"

¹ Mr. and Mrs. Polhill Turner were mobbed in Szechuen, and Roman Catholic missionaries in Shanse, on the charge of having caused drought by somehow hindering the Rain God in the performance of his functions.

was in accordance with the teaching of the Church, and that the Father was right in searching for the bewitcher.

Charges of immorality are favourite weapons against those who set up as teachers of a new creed. The low character of Buddhist and Taoist priests and the evil reputation of Buddhist nunneries may predispose the Chinese to credulity regarding accusations which are probably as exaggerated as though we were to judge the whole clerical caste in Europe from the backslidings of individual members. But neither can it be denied that in this, as in many other respects, foreign ecclesiastical customs lend themselves to misconception. A French priest admitted indeed, even before the Tientsin massacre, that the Sisters had come to China fifty years too soon. The Chinese are not alone in viewing with dislike the system of Confession and the relations of intimacy and confidence which it frequently involves. Hyper-zealous Mandarins often issue proclamations condemning the promiscuous assemblage of men and women at Buddhist temples. The denunciations fall flat, and there is no reason to suppose that greater harm ensues than on the occasion of similar gatherings in England, where a trace of the same idea may be found in the occasional separation of the sexes in church. Still, they express a classical prejudice which may perhaps have inspired a certain obscene caricature of a Christian congregation. "In China," wrote the Tsung-li Yamên more than twenty years ago, in pointing out

various causes of misunderstanding, "a good reputation and modesty are most important matters: men and women are not even allowed to shake hands, still less live together. . . . Yet there are some places where men and women are together not only at church, but in the interior of the house. The public . . . harbours suspicions, and thinks things contrary to propriety take place."¹ For the Chinese, without by any means exacting the Hindu purdah or the Egyptian veil, have decided ideas about female propriety and reserve. European ladies living at the Treaty ports dress in foreign clothes, and their peculiarities are passed over as barbarian eccentricity. But it is otherwise with the female missionaries who make their way into the interior in Chinese costume. It is too much overlooked that Chinese dress presupposes Chinese manners; and not only is Chinese etiquette an elaborate code against which even the most experienced are liable to offend, but solecisms that might be laughed at in the barbarian *au naturel* become tenfold more prominent when he or she is trying to pass as a Chinese. Women travelling without escort, unmarried women travelling with male escort, women living alone in an inland town, are certain to be misunderstood. Supporters of the China Inland Mission point out certain clauses in its Regulations where the necessity for caution in this respect is enjoined, and "engaged people," especially, are warned to be guarded in their inter-

¹ China (Blue Book), No. 3 of 1871.

course. But such matters are beyond printed rules. It is patent, at any rate, to every layman in China that they fail in this case. And not only are experienced missionaries among the foremost to protest against the scandal caused, but the leading English paper in Shanghai has gone so far as to express a wish that Consuls might be instructed to refuse passports to the interior to unmarried females in Chinese dress. "They may," it writes, "do some good when they get to their posts, but that good is outweighed by the scandal which they cause in their ignorance of what the Chinese call good manners. They are perfectly innocent in intention, but they often shock foreign notions of propriety, and continuously shock those of the Chinese." The matter has indeed been emphasized, by one of Her Majesty's Consuls, as a source of the scandal which finds expression in the hostile placards; and was noted by Lord Salisbury in a Memorandum of Advice which he addressed not long ago, with the concurrence of the Archbishop of Canterbury, to the heads of the principal Missionary Societies.

Very many good people will have difficulty in appreciating the advice to refrain from circulating uncommented translations of certain books of the Bible, which inspires another clause in this Memorandum. Yet the practice has been deprecated by the most enlightened missionaries in China. It was debated with some animation at a Conference¹ held

¹ "Records of General Conference of Protestant Missionaries." Shanghai, 1890.

two years ago in Shanghai, and was condemned by the late Dr. Williamson in terms that cannot be better rendered than by the following extract from his speech :—

“ A gentleman rose (at a meeting of the Scotch Bible Society, which Dr. Williamson was once attending) and with an air of overpowering solemnity, said : ‘ No notes or comments : we must give them the sincere milk of the word.’ And his view gained the day. Little did he know that this was the very thing which they were preventing us from doing, by compelling us to give them mere words and phrases devoid of the spiritual meaning of the original, which no Chinese words could of themselves convey without explanation.”

The delegate of the British and Foreign Bible Society, however, upheld¹ the contrary view ; and another member of that Society urged that a casual Chinaman, looking at a casual copy, might carry away a single verse that might work at the last moment to his salvation. But to men who know the Chinese it will seem just possible for him to light on one which might have a contrary effect. The sacrifice of Jephthah’s daughter, for instance, is not an act that would commend itself to the Chinese mind, in what light soever it be regarded : the proceedings of Ruth are at least open to misconception ; and, though Samuel’s treatment of Agag may seem less than savage to a people who are traditionally familiar with *ling-che*,² it savours too much of the spirit in which Rameses II. killed his

¹ “ Records of General Conference of Protestant Missionaries.” Shanghai, 1890.

² *Vide* (subsequent) Chapter xiv. on Judicial Torture.

prisoners before the altar of Ra, to be quite in accordance with the spirit of modern Christianity. If members of the Bible Societies will reflect what they would have thought if the Archbishop of Breslau had hewed Napoleon III. in pieces before the high altar of Cologne, in reliance on that precedent, they will realize that single texts may lead to startling conclusions.¹

But the misunderstandings do not begin and end with questions of mutilation and morality. It will probably surprise English readers, for instance, to find the question of buildings alleged as a pregnant source of trouble; but Mr. Michie² is undoubtedly right that, "hateful as the invader is *per se*, he becomes tenfold more so when he is seen erecting, on some commanding and salubrious site, beautiful (in his own eyes) but outlandish buildings which bring ill-luck to the whole district." And so it has been found necessary to recommend "that Chinese prejudice and superstition should be more carefully considered in the form and height of buildings

¹ It is satisfactory to gather from one of a series of thoughtful papers on "The Sources of the Anti-Foreign Disturbances in China," by the Rev. G. Reid, M.A., which have appeared in the *North China Herald*, that the Central Chinese Religious Tract Society (of Hankow) has been the means of bringing about a more enlightened view. Recognizing that the need for explanation is not confined to the Old Testament, it resolved to issue an annotated "Mark." Whether *post hoc* or *propter hoc*, the National Bible Society of Scotland is said to have decided to yield the point.—*Vide N.-C. Herald*, March 3rd, 1893.

² "Missionaries in China." *Ut supra*.

erected." Mr. Little¹ instances two distinct riots caused, of late years, in Chungking, by attempts to build churches on prominent sites in that city. The Roman Catholics had succeeded, in one case, in tempting some Taoist priests to sell a beautifully situated old temple, which they proposed replacing by one of their "hideous bastard-classic brick and plaster piles": while a Protestant missionary was about to build, on another conspicuous site, one of the "distractingly ugly whitewashed" structures that are so painfully out of harmony with their surroundings, instead of contenting himself with the Chinese house in which he had been temporarily located. The aggressive spirit of a new propaganda is prone to find expression in the sites chosen for its fanes: the church at Avebury stands athwart the great rampart of the Druidical temple, which has been cut through and levelled to admit it: the Roman Catholics have built at Canton, on the very spot formerly occupied by the Governor-General's residence, a cathedral which is a source of permanent irritation: the (French) Bishop of Peking has had the wisdom to extinguish, lately, a still graver cause of annoyance by consenting to the removal of another cathedral which had been built close alongside the palace enclosure.² It would take long to explain the nature of a curious belief in Feng-shui (lit. wind and water) which missionaries

¹ "Through the Yangtze Gorges." By A. Little, pp. 239 and 245.

² Appendix H.

of all denominations constantly outrage by these (in China) incongruous structures; but this rigid adherence to foreign ecclesiastical architecture, as though there were some inherent virtue in its shape, seems scarcely different in spirit from the superstitious antagonism of the Chinese.

The question of buildings involves that of land and residence. And this raises the whole question of the political conditions under which missionaries have settled down in the interior of China. This point is a curious one, and may repay investigation. Art. XII. of Lord Elgin's Treaty (1859) provides that—

“British subjects, whether at the ports or other places, desiring to build or open houses, warehouses, churches, hospitals, or burial-grounds, shall make their agreement for the land or buildings they require at the rate prevailing among the people, equitably,” etc.

And the Editor of our “Hunan Picture Gallery” feels aggrieved because the British Government “refuse to construe this as conferring right of residence in the interior with its necessary accompaniments, the right of renting or purchasing houses or land.” The words “or other places” seem to him to cover the whole ground. But that is just what comes of publishing things “without note or comment”; for the fact is that those words were introduced by Lord Elgin, at the suggestion of a diplomatist now living, for purposes of elasticity and none other. Some of the treaty ports—Shanghai, for instance, and Canton—are situated up rivers; and the purpose of these words was to prevent

objection if it were found desirable to open establishments, say nearer their *embouchure*, at Whampoa or Woosung. No such thought as the right of buying land and settling anywhere and everywhere was present in the minds of either English or Chinese plenipotentiaries. The supposition carries, indeed, its own refutation ; for, if it had been intended that the words should bear any such extended sense, the limitation of residence to certain specified ports would have been superfluous.

Let us turn, then, to the French Treaty concluded at the same time by Baron Gros, where the Editor believes there is to be found a more emphatic provision, to which he and others become entitled under the "favoured nation" clause. Article XIII. of that Treaty stipulates that, "efficacious protection shall be given to missionaries who proceed (*qui se rendront*) peacefully into the interior furnished with proper passports," and it may be held, of course, that this implies the right to sojourn. But Article VI. of a Supplementary Convention dictated (in 1860) after the capture of Peking contains a more important clause :—

"Conformément à l'édit Impérial rendu [en] 1846 par l'auguste Empereur Tao Kwang, les établissements religieux et de bienfaisance qui ont été confisqués aux Chrétiens pendant les persécutions dont ils ont été les victimes seront rendus à leurs propriétaires par l'intermédiaire du Ministre de France en Chine auquel le Gouvernement Impérial les fera délivrer avec les cimetières et les autres édifices qui en dépendaient."

It has been well said that the effect of this is as though France, after beating England, were to

insist on the restoration to the Roman Church of the properties confiscated at the time of the Reformation! But it still fell short of the aspirations of at least one enthusiast. The Chinese, having no knowledge of any language but their own, were necessarily in the hands of the foreign interpreters; and a French missionary, who was temporarily attached to the Embassy in that capacity, introduced into the Chinese text—presumably while the Convention was being transcribed for signature—an additional clause to the following effect :—

“It is, in addition, permitted to French missionaries to rent and purchase land in all the provinces, and to erect buildings thereon at pleasure.”

Fortunately for China, another article stipulates that the French text shall rule (*fera foi*) ; and it was, I believe, admitted, when the interpolation came to be remarked, that the claim it apparently conceded could not be upheld. The thin end of the wedge had, however, been inserted before the position had been well defined, and a fact had been accomplished which the Chinese have never ventured to contest.—Tao Kwang's edict, which was obtained by M. Lagréné shortly after Sir H. Pottinger had imposed the Treaty of Nanking, was of comparatively moderate scope. “Ancient houses built in the reign of Kanghi (1661—1722) which had been preserved to the present time” were to be restored, certainly, to local Christian communities

which could prove their title ; but " churches which had been converted into temples and dwelling-houses for the people " were specifically excepted, and foreigners were textually " prohibited from going into the interior to propagate religion." That prohibition is removed, both by the clause in the French treaty already quoted and by a provision in the Russian treaty that the Chinese Government will allow missionaries to propagate Christianity, "*et ne leur empêchera pas de circuler dans l'intérieur de l'empire.*" But there is a wide difference between this and the clause interpolated in the Convention of Peking ; nor is it too much to say that the irritation caused by claims now advanced, aggravated by the pretensions to a protectorate over their converts which the missionaries evolved out of the phrase enjoining toleration, were largely responsible for the outbreaks that culminated in the Massacre of Tientsin. The correspondence between Lord Clarendon and Sir Rutherford Alcock in 1869-70¹ proves that the English Government was not then disposed to support its subjects in claims that " rested on no solid foundation, but on an interpolation of words in the Chinese version of the French Treaty." What their French brethren enjoyed could not, however, be denied them. And so—the Chinese Government not protesting because it feared to protest—a conditional right was allowed to grow

¹ "China," No. 9, of 1870.

up : missionaries¹ being allowed to claim privileges from which merchants² are specifically debarred—until a situation has been created upon which Admiral Richards, who was commanding our fleet in China during the recent troubles, comments in the following terms :—

“It seems to be the special aim of the Missionary societies to establish themselves outside treaty limits ; and, having done so, they are not prepared to take the risks which they voluntarily incur, but, on the contrary, are loudest in their clamour for gunboats, as their contributions to the Shanghai press sufficiently demonstrate. . . .

“It appears to be necessary, after the lessons taught by these occurrences, that some understanding should be arrived at with regard to missionaries in China outside treaty limits. . . . It seems altogether unreasonable that the Societies should exercise absolute freedom in going where they please, and then that their agents should look to her Majesty's Government for protection.³

And as an instance in point, Admiral Richards appends the following letter, written by the Rev.

¹ An arrangement was made by the French Legation in 1864-5 for the vesting of proprietary rights in the native *Chretientés* rather than the priest—an arrangement which has not apparently commended itself to, or has, at any rate, not been made available by, Protestant missions.

² A case has been referred to in a previous chapter, where a British merchant tried to open a warehouse at Fatsan, twelve miles only from Canton. But his establishment was forcibly closed by the mandarins, his goods confiscated, servants imprisoned, books examined to discover Chinese who had dealt with him, and who were subsequently threatened, fined and harassed. He got no compensation, and was practically told to think himself lucky to get his goods returned. This may be contrasted with the attitude Foreign Governments assume when a mission is looted.

³ “China” (Blue Book), No. 1, of 1892, pp. 24, 25.

W. E. Macklin to the Commander of H.M.S. *Porpoise*, when the riots were at their height :—

“What is the use of sending our men-of-war to ports like Wuhu, with only a small official? Why not bring a few gunboats to Nanking, and order the Viceroy to stop the nonsense in his district, with the alternative of a bombardment? I hope your august presence may scare the evil elements in Wuhu. Our Government should get some good magic lanterns, and show some of the pictures of gunboats to the officials. It might save the expense of manufacturing war vessels.”

While, “to give an idea of the way in which compromising disasters may be said to be courted at times,” he quotes a report by H.M. Consul at Kiukiang, that twenty-two female missionaries attached to the China Inland Mission, whom he had requested to come down from an inland town to the Treaty port for safety, were removed back again by the Rev. Mr. McCarthy who believed, apparently, that “strenuous prayer would have met the exigencies of the situation.”

It will probably startle many good people who fancy they are sending out a message of peace and goodwill to be told, further, that “every missionary in every part of China is an element of more or less disturbance in the civil affairs of his neighbourhood.”¹ Yet that is a missionary’s verdict on the situation. A similar thought finds expression in Lord Salisbury’s and Archbishop Benson’s guarded advice “to refrain from interfering in disputes

¹ “The Riots and their Lesson.” By the Rev. J. Ross. *Chinese Recorder*, August, 1892. Also in *N.-O. Herald*, November 11, 1892.

between Christian and non-Christian natives"; and a high Chinese official at a Treaty Port, when asked for his opinion and advice after the riots, said the best remedial measure he could suggest was "that missionaries should cease to favour their converts in lawsuits with non-Christians." In this, as in many other cases, Roman missionaries are certainly the most aggressive, though Protestants are by no means free from blame. Reference has been made to the "pretension to protect" into which they promptly expanded the "prohibition to persecute"; and the Chinese have persistently alleged that disreputable persons enrolled themselves as nominal converts in order to profit by this protection.¹ A serious outbreak which occurred in Szechuen just before the Tientsin massacre was ascribed to a dispute between avowed Christians and non-Christians, in which the (local) French priest not only advocated the part of the former, but went the length of putting arms in their hands. The propensity to meddle in temporal affairs was one of the points most strongly urged by the Tsung-li Yamên, during the negotiations which followed that terrible outbreak; and I have heard British officials of long experience in China maintain that it is one of the most pregnant causes of official ill-

¹ The facility with which bad characters find admission to the fold; the readiness of missionaries to hold a shield over the heads of their erring converts; and, lastly, their rejection of Ancestor Worship, formed the staple of criticism addressed to Dr. Martin by eminent officials at Peking.

will. In case of trouble, a Mandarin's duty is, of course, to maintain order at all hazards and with all the resources at his command; but there is a deal of human nature even in a Mandarin; and an official who has found himself between the devil of foreign interference and the deep sea of popular irritation would be more than human if he felt kindly disposed towards those responsible for the worry.

There can be equally little doubt that a fertile cause of anger is hinted at in Lord Salisbury's final recommendation "that any endeavours to combat heathen prejudices and superstitions should be conducted with moderation and judgment, and that care should be taken to avoid giving legitimate cause for offence. There are large-minded missionaries in whose case that advice is unnecessary; for the simple reason that experience, education, and sympathetic perception lead them to act in accordance with the precept. There is, unfortunately, equally little doubt that it is too often infringed. It is a missionary¹ who admits that "standing with his back towards the tablet of Confucius, he (or his companion) addressed the assembled crowd on the folly and sin of worshipping deceased men—perhaps the first Gospel discourse ever delivered in a temple dedicated to the worship of the Chinese sage." It may strike some as strange that he has not also to admit that he and

¹ "Social Life of the Chinese." Rev. Justus Doolittle. Chapter xiv.

his companions were summarily ejected, as would presumably happen if a Chinese, *mutatis mutandis*, could be found to act similarly in St. Paul's. Another prominent missionary¹ lately suggested that foreign Governments should insist on a certain clause relating to Christianity being expunged from the "Sacred Edict" of Kanghi—which is much as though France and Turkey were to insist that all reference to heretics and infidels should be struck out of our own liturgy. It is gratifying to have to add that this proposal evoked a rebuff from Bishop Moule,² who remarked that, from the Confucian point of view, Christianity must be unorthodox, but that he could hardly imagine dissuasion from what the author believed to be erroneous, expressed in less passionate language.

People who are sensitive to a word against Christianity should reflect that the Chinese may equally object to denunciation of their cult. When foreigners exact the destruction of anti-Christian literature, *literati* retaliate by advising that foreigners should be requested to burn Christian books, and "to study, instead, the sixteen chapters of the sacred exhortation of Yung-Cheng."³ When foreigners protest indignantly against the foul misrepresentations of themselves and their creed contained in such books as "A Death Blow to Corrupt Doctrine," *literati* are found to retaliate that the

¹ *N.-C. Herald*, December 29, 1891, and January 8, 1892.

² *Ibid.* February 19, 1892.

³ "China," No. 1, of 1892, pp. 134-5.

books circulated by missionaries "tend to insubordination and anarchy, and destruction of morality," that they "bark at departed ancestors," and declare that Chinese reverence has no real existence.¹ Missionaries are naturally shocked by the blasphemous play upon the word "*chu*," and by the revolting caricatures in which they are libelled. They would do well, however, to reflect that a Literate who is publicly told that "Confucius is in hell"² may feel tempted to retaliate in cartoons implying an opposite supposition. The Gothic chief who was well-nigh yielding to the preachers of his day, was deterred by their assertion that his ancestors were in a similar predicament!

It is too often overlooked that we have not to deal, in China, with savages who can be cowed into a belief that the white man's religion must be on a par with his superiority in weapons, nor with leaders who are intellectually "lower than the Christian child." The Chinese have a culture of their own—defective in our eyes—but of which they are intensely proud; they have classics which are remarkable for purity of thought and expression, and a cult which has served as a bond of social union through untold generations. It is fantastic to suppose that the first European commissioned to inform them that Christianity is superior to Confucianism will be able to convince them that his impression must necessarily be true.

¹ "China," No. 1, of 1892, pp. 171-3.

² *Vide* "The Riots and their Lessons," *ut supra*.

Only men of wide education and large sympathies, men sufficiently acquainted with the religious thought of China to understand what they are attacking, and sufficiently familiar with a difficult language to preach and argue without exciting ridicule, can hope to gain a sympathetic hearing. The day is past when public opinion approved proselytism by force ; yet it is little less to insist that missionaries of every conceivable sect and of every intellectual standard shall be allowed to establish themselves and their buildings in the teeth of popular dislike, and to expect that that dislike can be hindered from finding expression.

Not that the Chinese Government can escape responsibility. If they have not dared to protest against an aggressive propaganda, neither have they exhausted themselves in efforts to restrain their own people. They have allowed, and possibly connived at, tacit opposition, where they would have done better to protest before the world against undue encroachment. Missionaries have been right, too, in accusing the local officials of worse than indifference to the gathering storm. There is intense anti-foreign feeling in Hunan, and the Mandarins have not, probably, much control over the turbulent population of that famous province. But in Hupeh, Kiangse, and Anhwei, where the late outbreak occurred, they have the ascendant ; and if it had not been for an apathy partly characteristic, but arising partly, no doubt, from tacit sympathy, the rioters would probably not have gone the lengths

they did. For the officials can exercise much influence in the beginning, though they have little force available to quell a riot that has once begun. Broadly speaking, sympathy with the actual rioting lessens, doubtless, as responsibility increases, and is more than counterbalanced by fear of diplomatic trouble in the Cabinet itself. Guilty of *fainéantise* the latter undoubtedly is; and it is difficult to acquit it of unwillingness as well as weakness in its failure to punish, adequately, men to whom the responsibility for disseminating hostile literature has been brought home. But the trouble, anxiety, and diplomatic embarrassment which riots superinduce, forbid the assumption that it is willing to see them occur. The object lesson afforded by France, where the Government has difficulty in holding the balance between Anti-clericals and the Church, notwithstanding that the religion is national and all concerned are French, may suggest that Chinese statesmen (themselves unconvinced of its value) have real difficulty in compelling respect for teachers of an alien creed whose ritual gives rise to so much misconception, and whose bearing constantly shocks the inmost sentiments of those whom they would convert.

So far as religion pure and simple is concerned, the Chinese are by no means intolerant. There stands out, as Mr. Michie remarks, against any such assumption, "the broad historical fact of toleration and patronage extended to Buddhism and Moham-
medanism. The presumption is, therefore, irre-

sistibly strong that it is not the religious, but some other element in the missionary propaganda, that rouses their passions." What that element is—or rather, what those elements are—may be gathered in some measure from the foregoing pages. It has, of course, been impossible to deal with every aspect of the question; and I cordially recommend those who wish to pursue it farther, to Mr. Michie's able brochure. I have been concerned only to exhibit certain forces that are continually operating to produce outbreaks which periodically disturb our political relations with the Chinese; and enough has probably been said to justify the conclusion that the whole question of missionary intercourse needs regulation and revision. "You may burn"—writes Mr. Ross, and remember it is a missionary who is speaking—"you may burn every pamphlet written against the foreigner and his religion; you may imprison and bamboo every writer of every sentence inciting to outrage upon the foreigner; you may get the Chinese Government to levy a heavy tax on the neighbourhood where any outrage has taken place; you may make them pay tenfold for every damage done; but you do not touch the root of the whole mischief. You are simply sitting on the safety-valve; and if your remedies go no farther, then I fear you are preparing for an outburst among the populace which will be more drastic than anything that has yet occurred."¹

¹ *Chinese Recorder*, *ut supra*.

Writing four-and-twenty years ago, Sir Rutherford Alcock, then Her Majesty's Minister at Peking, closed an exhaustive review¹ of the missionary question by remarking that it seriously affected the interests of commerce, inasmuch as it tended to excite jealousies, fears, enmities, and popular tumults, which are inimical to interests that depend largely on peace and goodwill. Missionaries protest that the use of force in connection with their operations is abhorrent to their feelings; but "all experience in China tends to establish the fact that moral means are only effective in so far as they are sustained by force, latent or manifest, and known to be available to give them efficiency. . . . In the end, therefore, the whole question of missionary difficulties resolves itself into one of peace or war; the propagation of Christianity under the menace of forcible intervention by one or more foreign Powers against the will of the rulers, in defiance of the moral convictions of the nation—that is to say, of all who form public opinion . . . of the millions who are saturated with a knowledge of the history and philosophy of their country." Much has happened since then, but events seem to prove that, in this respect at least, the situation has not greatly changed.

¹ *China*, No. 9, of 1870.

CHAPTER XII.

ANCESTOR WORSHIP.

WHETHER because mere oppositeness of thought and custom seem necessarily quaint, or whether, as Dr. Edkins has suggested,¹ because Sir John Mandeville and Marco Polo told such wonderful things that their readers did not feel sure whether they were dealing in fact or fiction, Europeans have always been prone to see only a ludicrous side of Chinese life. And in no respect is this more true than in regard to religion. We hear a great deal about Buddhism and Taoism, and temples, and idols, and superstition : we note with amusement that a certain god has been dragged forth from his cool sanctuary in order that he may be brought to realize, in the blazing sunshine, the crying need of rain ; but we hear very little about the one cult which has deep root in the national life. It is not his affection for Buddhism which offers the chief obstacle to a Chinaman's acceptance of Christianity. It is when he is asked to abandon the Worship of

¹ " Religion in China," by the Rev. J. Edkins, D.D.

Ancestors that what may be called the great religious instinct of his soul is wounded and scandalized;¹ yet this has, for two hundred years, been a cardinal requirement of the Christian propaganda. Despite the protests of large-minded and experienced men who have really studied the creeds they wish to subvert, the Churches have agreed to anathematize Chinese Ancestor Worship as idolatrous; and as long, declares Dr. Martin (himself formerly a missionary, and now President of the Tung-wen College at Peking), as this attitude is maintained: "As long as missionaries manifest a determination to pluck this keystone out of China's social fabric, so long will the innumerable clans that form the nation, rallying round the altars of their forefathers, form an impenetrable phalanx barring at every point the ingress of a disintegrating doctrine."² It can scarcely be uninteresting, then, to examine the features of a cult which is so deep-rooted in Chinese sentiment, and which is so generally admitted to be a dominant factor in the fortunes of the Christian propaganda.

One is struck, at the outset, by the resemblance in many respects between the Chinese practice and the corresponding observances in the days of ancient Rome. Substituting tablets for images we seem, in fact, to find ourselves in the presence of the rites in

¹ "New China and Old," by the Ven. G. E. Moule.

² "The Worship of Ancestors," Rev. A. P. Martin, D.D. Records of Missionary Conference at Shanghai, 1890.

the Lararium which have been taken to be the precursors of our own family prayer. Every Chinese household has somewhere within its doors an ancestral hall, a shrine in which are deposited the tablets of deceased ancestors; it may be a separate building or it may be a mere shelf; that is a detail of circumstance and pecuniary resource. Every clan also has its ancestral temple, which forms a rallying point for its members, who come often from great distances to join in the spring or autumn ceremonies; and there, as in the household shrines, representative tablets are set up. These tablets are slips of wood of varying size in different provinces, but approximately about one foot high and three inches wide, placed upright on a pedestal and having inscribed on either side the name, rank, age, dates of birth and death and other particulars of the person it is intended to commemorate. They may remind us, so far, of a tombstone kept at home instead of being placed on the grave.

But that is not all. Besides the record, each tablet has also inscribed on it four characters: *shen chu*, meaning "spirit lord," and *shen wei*, meaning "spirit throne"; and it is now that we enter the arena of theological controversy. The characters *chu* and *wei*, when first written, are left incomplete in a peculiar respect: they lack each a dot; and the imposition of these dots involves an elaborate ceremonial which I will ask Dr. Blodget¹ to de-

¹ "Ancestral Worship and Christianity." Missionary Conference, *ut supra*.

scribe, in order that there may be no suspicion of slurring over the "idolatry" of which he is an uncompromising opponent. The rite occurs during the funeral obsequies, of which it forms an important feature. A Mandarin of the highest rank available, or a simple literate—according to the social status of the family—is asked to officiate; the idea being, apparently, that he comes as a representative of the Emperor who stands at the head of the national cult.

"Along with this chief personage, four others of lesser grade are also invited to be present and assist in the ceremony. The time having arrived for dotting the tablet, the five take their places, one at the head, two on either side of the table on which the tablet is lying. The master of the ceremonies cries out, 'Hand up the vermilion pencil'; whereupon one of the subordinate [celebrants] hands up the pencil to his chief. The master of the ceremonies next says, 'May it please our distinguished guest to turn towards the East and receive the breath of life'; whereupon the chief celebrant turns towards the East and emits a slight breath upon the tip of the pencil. The master of the ceremonies next cries, 'Impose the red dot'; whereupon the chief mandarin, first bowing to his four coadjutors as though unworthy to perform the act, imposes the missing dots, first on the character *chu*, and then on the character *wei*. These dots are then covered with black ink by the same person and with the same ceremonies, and the consecration is complete."

"There is," we are told, in all this, "a kind of incorporation of the spirit in the tablet as its visible home, where it receives offerings and prayers and manifests its good will or disapprobation." And now begins the homage which, although it is not image-worship, is condemned by its critics as idolatrous.

"The chief mourner (properly the eldest son), after this, takes the tablet from one of the attendant magistrates and sets it upright on a small table in front of the coffin. The magistrate who has imposed the dots then comes forward with his four associates, and, all kneeling on a mat before the tablet, pours out three chalices of wine as a libation, after which the five prostrate themselves three times before the tablet. Then all retire, their duty being accomplished.

"The tablet thus consecrated is carried out the next day to the cemetery upon a pavilion adorned with hangings of silk, its place in the funeral procession being some distance in front of the catafalque. At evening it is returned to the house of the eldest son, where incense is burned before it morning and evening, and offerings are made during the three years of mourning. When these are finished it is transferred to the ancestral hall to be worshipped with the other tablets of the clan," [on certain prescribed dates and festivals, among which one called "Ching-ming," in April, and another in August are the most important].

The ritual seems to involve three essentials: the posture, the invocation, and the offerings. The posture is that of kneeling alternating with prostrations. But that is precisely what a child does before its parents, an inferior before a great official, the official himself before the Emperor; and so the question at once suggests itself whether a Chinaman thinks that he "worships" his living parents.¹ Miss Newton² seems to think he does, and speaks of "adoring" the ancestral tablet and adoring parents during the marriage ceremony, with equal horror! And so with the offerings. Dishes containing food are spread out before the tablets; but

¹ "New China and Old," *ut supra*.

² "Betrothal and Marriage Ceremonies." *Chinese Recorder*, Aug., 1892.

the underlying idea is unquestionably that of a banquet. The definition of Confucius is "serving the dead as they would have been served when alive"; and clothing and money are usually added in pursuance of this idea. When the Emperor offers a similar sacrifice to the Supreme Spirit of Heaven, he invites his ancestors to be present at the banquet by placing their tablets on the altar. Births and betrothals are notified to ancestors very much as they are notified to living kindred. The Emperor notifies his ancestors of his own accession. In the marriage ceremony the bridegroom presents his wife to his ancestors, as a new member of the family, to invoke their paternal blessing. And all this may help us to realize the import of the invocation in which so many missionaries perceive the ascription of divine attributes. In the address offered by the Emperor, as quoted by Dr. Edkins, there is no prayer at all. It merely traces his descent, declares his personality, and goes on to say, "I dare announce to my ancestor that I have with care, in this first month of spring, provided sacrificial animals, silk, wine, and various dishes as an expression of my unfailing thoughtfulness, and humbly beg acceptance of the offerings."

That words of supplication are often used in the course of popular ritual is an admitted fact, though they are alleged to be of secondary importance and are even omitted altogether from some breviaries.¹

¹ "Religion in China," *ut supra*.

There are such, for instance, in the following, which is said to be a common form :—

“I . . . presume to come before the grave of my ancestors. . . . Revolving years have brought again the season of spring. Cherishing sentiments of veneration I look up and sweep your tomb. Prostrate I pray that you will come and be present, and that you will grant to your posterity that they may be prosperous and illustrious. At this season of genial showers and genial breezes I desire to recompense the root of my existence, and exert myself sincerely. Always grant your safe protection. My trust is in your divine spirit. Reverently I present the five-fold sacrifice of a pig, a fowl, a duck, a goose, and a fish ; also an offering of five plates of fruit with libations of spirituous liquors, earnestly entreating that you will come and view them. With the most attentive respect this annunciation is presented on high.”¹

This prayer, it will be noted, is offered at the tomb. For, besides the ceremonies in the Ancestral Hall, periodical rites are performed also at the grave. In spring and autumn, families are wont to choose a day for visiting the resting-places of their dead, carrying food and wine for offerings and libations, imitation clothes and money, candles and incense. First clearing away the grass and covering the tombs with a layer of fresh earth, they present their offerings, and perform various ceremonies much as before the tablet. A table is spread, a paper imitating the tablet is put thereon, candles are lighted, incense is burned, dishes of various kinds are set in order, and the chief mourner presents the whole, for his ancestor's acceptance, in the

¹ “The Middle Kingdom,” by S. Wells Williams, D.D.

terms and with the ceremonial that have been described.

“Est honor et tumulis. Animas placate paternas,
Parvaque in extinctas munera ferte pyras.”

Do we not almost seem in the presence of the Feralia of ancient Rome?

This is the reason why the Chinese are so anxious for male children. It is a son who officiates—the eldest son of the family in the household, the eldest son of the senior family in the case of the Ancestral Hall. At an important function which the Rev. Justus Doolittle describes¹ at Foochow, the chief person “was a lad some six or eight years old, he being the eldest son of the eldest son, &c., &c., of the remote male ancestors from whom all the Chinese bearing his ancestral name living in the city claim to have descended. He was the chief of the clan.”

The presumption that the happiness of the dead depends on sacrifices from their living descendants, with its corollary that neglected souls turn into hungry ghosts, is akin to that expressed by Palinurus in begging Æneas to accord his body funeral rites, and is one of the grounds alleged for condemning the cult. There is at Hangchow, for instance, a large temple erected for the benefit of “ancestors” whose descendants have all died. Here their tablets are collected, and here the necessary offerings are made and the usual cere-

¹ “Social Life of the Chinese,” ch. viii.

monies gone through, by a proper attendant, at the spring and autumn festivals.

Such, in bare outline, is the Chinese worship of ancestors;¹ and surely the Churches which have refined the Feralia up to a pilgrimage to Père-Lachaise, the Lemuralia up to a general Mass for the Dead, and have whittled the observances of Halloween down to an occasional bonfire and a collect for All Saints, might trust themselves to deal tenderly with a cult which lies at the root of Chinese polity and which even those who condemn it admit to have been a powerful agent for good, from the earliest ages to which its existence and operation can be traced. Laymen may, indeed, find it difficult to perceive how ceremonies which they will probably regard as the expression of a touching and beautiful sentiment, can have incurred such sweeping condemnation. It may help us to gain an insight if we review, with Du Halde,² the early history of the controversy.

¹ The fête of All Souls is held in Japan in the middle of July; the idea being, as Miss Bickersteth has lately told us, that of "a festival to spirits which are supposed to visit their former home, and are welcomed with fires and food spread on tables: " a clear extension of the Chinese idea of inviting them to a banquet. Offerings of food are also thrown into the river or sea, and put on paper boats and launched, in the poetic fancy that they may thus reach their destination. The spirit is supposed, in Japan, to dwell in a mirror instead of a tablet. But the observances seem in other respects very similar to those prevailing in China, whence the cult was presumably derived.

² "Description Géographique et Historique de la Chine."

The scene opens at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Partly through their attainments and the services they had been able to render, partly perhaps through a certain suppleness which has been accounted to them for unrighteousness, the Jesuits stood high in the esteem of the first Manchu sovereigns, and had been able to secure a large measure of favour for the propaganda they had inaugurated. "Il ne pouvait," says Du Halde, "y avoir de dispositions plus favorables"—a favourable edict, numerous workers, open protection, a church within the very palace precincts; but all was upset by disputes among the missionaries themselves. Members of other denominations poured in, and altercations arose on questions that have continued to agitate their successors to the present day. These were (1) the proper name for God: whether the Chinese, by the word *Tien*, understood a material heaven or a supreme being; (2) whether the ceremonies observed in respect to the dead were religious or merely civil rites. Ricci had decided that *Tien* was an equivalent for God, and that the ancestral rites should be tolerated. There is, he maintained, nothing in them appertaining to religion—neither in the institution nor in the intention of the neophytes who practise them; there is neither priest (*sacrificateur*) nor minister of an idolatrous sect: one sees only philosophers and students who come to acknowledge the Teacher of their Nation for their Master: the place where the dead are honoured is a hall and not a temple: the

Chinese attribute no divinity either to Confucius or to the souls of the dead : they neither solicit nor expect anything from them ; and it is, consequently, not a religious but a civil cult. But Ricci was dead ; and a Spanish Dominican named Morales condemned the whole system as idolatry. He was backed up by his co-sectaries ; the dispute was referred to Rome, and Innocent X. was persuaded (A.D. 1645) to sustain his contention.

The Jesuits, however, were by no means disposed to acquiesce tamely in this conclusion. They sent a delegate named Martin who succeeded in convincing the Sacred College that, “ as the excision of these ceremonies might be an invincible obstacle to the conversion of a great empire which was extremely jealous of its customs, the part of prudence was to tolerate them ” ; and Alexander VII. confirmed this decision. Thus the second goal was scored by the disciples of Ricci ; but their position did not long remain unchallenged. There arrived out, in 1684, certain members of the “ Missions Etrangères,” who had, says Du Halde, scarcely begun to stammer a language which the Jesuits had been studying all their lives, before they judged that Ricci and his followers had not caught the sense of the Chinese classics. One of these, Maigrot, vicar apostolic of Fohkien, pronounced that the word *Tien* signifies a material heaven ; upheld Morales’ contention that the ancestral ceremonies are real sacrifices and the places where they are practised real temples ; and sent an emissary to

Rome to urge these views afresh, without informing the Jesuits of his intention! The latter now appealed to the Emperor Kanghi, who ruled entirely in their favour—that *Tien* means God, and that the ceremonies in question are political, in the sense that they do not imply what the Church understands by worship and religion.

The philosopher, to apply a favourite expression of Gibbon, may be reminded of the extraordinary Homoousian controversy which Constantine thought he had disposed of by calling it “a trifling and subtle question concerning an incomprehensible point of the law, which was foolishly asked by the bishop and imprudently answered by the presbyter.”¹ But then the philosopher might fail to appreciate the subtle importance of a dot! Kang-hi’s verdict had, at any rate, no more effect than Constantine’s on the disputants. To submit a theological question to the dialecticians who had been conducting, for centuries, the dispute with Byzantium which led to the disruption of the Roman Empire, was worse than throwing an estate into Chancery before Dickens wrote “Bleak House.”

Rome was, at any rate, not likely to be influenced by a Chinese Emperor’s ruling on a point of theological dogma: adverse counsels prevailed, and Clement XI. issued (A.D. 1704) a bull condemning every feature of the ritual. Neither the worship of ancestors nor of Confucius, neither the

¹ “Decline and Fall,” &c., ch. xxi.

ceremonies at the tombs nor before the tablets could be permitted. There was only one reservation:—

“That small tablets bearing nothing whatever but the name of the deceased may be tolerated, provided always that they are connected with no superstition and give no scandal—that is to say, provided that the Chinese who are not yet Christians may not suppose that they who keep them are of the same mind as the pagans, and if, moreover, there be placed by the side of such tablets a declaration of the Christian faith in regard to the dead and of what is genuine filial piety in children and descendants towards parents and ancestors.”

The apostles of tolerance were too well aware of the results such a decree would entail, to leave a stone unturned to procure its neutralization. Tournon, patriarch of India, had been sent out to arrange matters on the new basis, but succeeded only in raising the predicted storm, and was promptly banished to Macao, where he died in 1710. A proposal to leave the settlement of details to the local heads of the Church was scarcely more successful; for these were, according to Du Halde, afraid of being excommunicated if the compromise were too liberal, and of ruining the missions if it were too narrow. So the Pope sent Cardinal Mezzabarba, who succeeded in obtaining an audience of the Emperor, but was curtly informed—in answer to a request that Christians might be permitted to conform to the papal ruling—that “the decree of the Pope being incompatible with the customs of the Empire, the Christian religion could no longer subsist in it.” Realizing ap-

parently, on the spot, the truth of the Jesuits' warning, the legate issued certain regulations which might soften the harshness of the bull, and started for Europe to represent how matters stood. But Kanghi and Clement died in the interval; Benedict XIV. rejected the compromise, and the Emperor Yungching determined to exclude a propaganda which had caused such an infinity of trouble. A petition by a Foochow Literate gave the signal for persecution, and the charge of neglecting the reverence due to ancestors which was therein put forward has continued to find expression, in every hostile placard, to the present day.

It was the question of Ancestor Worship which caused the first outbreak of persecution (A.D. 1791) in Corea. Christianity had made its way across the frontier through the medium of certain members of the annual tribute-bearing Mission, who had come in contact with the Roman Missionaries at Peking. Questioned by the neophytes as to the permissibility of the cult, Bishop Govea had, as in duty bound under Pope Clement's bull, replied in the negative; whereupon two enthusiasts named Yung and Kwan burned their Ancestral tablets and refused to make the customary sacrifices at a parent's funeral. There was, of course, an outcry of horror; the Government was obliged to take action; and they were tried and executed for what the popular sentiment condemned as an outrage and a crime.

One cannot help feeling, as one reads Du Halde's

narrative, that the whole dispute was embittered by sectarian jealousy. The Jesuits had probably not welcomed the intrusion of other orders into a domain which they had made their own: a feeling of antagonism to themselves had arisen in Europe, and it is difficult to resist an impression that the contest had tended to degenerate into a trial of party strength. It would seem difficult indeed, on any other hypothesis, to reconcile the attitude of the Papacy with its own traditions. A Church which admits images need surely not have recoiled from tablets, nor a hierarchy which consecrates the Day of the Dead from the observances of the Ching-ming. The ancient Romans exercised a large tolerance towards the gods of conquered races, and Roman ecclesiasticism inherited the assimilative faculty. All Saints' Day itself is a graft upon Halloween—

“ . . . that night when fairies light
On Cassilis Downans dance.”

But it was not till A.D. 835 that the festivals were made coincident. There can be little doubt that All Saints was originally an adaptation of the spring festival of the Romans. It was Gregory IV. who made it coincide with the great heathen festival of the 1st November. To associate the worship of dead saints with the observances that marked the expiry of summer would be a natural act of policy in the days when the Church was still busy supplanting heathen by Christian observances.

And All Souls, the "Day of the Dead," would seem to be an extension of the same idea. A pilgrim coming from the Holy Land, where he must surely have been studying the *Æneid*, was driven ashore on a rocky island between Sicily and Thessalonica, where he found a hermit who told him that here was an opening to the nether world, through which could be heard the cries of those in torment, and through which he had also heard the complaints of the devils at the number of souls that were torn from them by the prayers of the pious! The pilgrim told his tale to the monks of Clugny, about the efficacy of whose supplication the devils had, it would appear, made especial lamentation; and they sympathizingly fixed the day following All Saints as a festival for All Souls.

So legend accounts for the origin and spread of the custom; and, in the Latin world at least, it shows no symptom of dying out. Take, for instance, the following description, in the *Daily Telegraph*, of what happened in Paris on the 1st November, 1891:—

"The Rue de la Roquette, which seems destined to be connected with death, being at once the place of public execution and the main highway to Père Lachaise, presented, as usual, the spectacle of one continuous procession of flower and wreath-laden carriages conveying mourning relatives to the last resting-place of their dead. All the places of sepulture in the capital looked very beautiful to-day after the partial renewal of what is termed their 'toilette' yesterday, and by the time the gates were closed this afternoon the 'God's-acres' contained huge masses of freshly-cut

flowers and appropriately-inscribed wreaths. According to the official estimate some four hundred thousand people, or about one-fifth of the entire population of Paris, visited the cemeteries yesterday, and if we add those who performed the same sad duty to-day, it is safe to presume that one Parisian out of every four has made a point of paying a personal tribute to the memory of some relative or friend. These figures speak eloquently for the feeling of family affection ingrained in a number of people popularly but erroneously supposed to be the most light-hearted, frivolous, and irreverent on the face of the earth."

Or take, again, the following description, in the *Times*, of what occurred at Naples on the same date and occasion :—

"It is the Fête of the Dead, *Festa dei Morti*, one of the most solemn observances of the Church, or rather of the people. All business is suspended, for there is a rush to the graves of the departed, and the Campo Santo is a scene of tumult. Not a carriage is to be found without difficulty, and pedestrians line the long road to the spot where lie the remains of those who were and are the objects of so much love. It is sometimes urged as a reproof to the Southerners that they send their deceased friends to their last resting-place without accompanying them ; but if their grief is too deep to allow of this, they manifest their affection by unceasing visits to their graves, and by the dedication of one day especially to this solemn duty. Naples, and even the smallest village in the neighbourhood, are occupied, this day, in preparing *corone* for their deceased friends. Our gardens are despoiled of their beauty, and *fiori dei morti*, as chrysanthemums are called, are sought for eagerly. Where there are none to be found, as in great cities, the artificial immortelles take their place. It is in this way that the living and the dead are united, and that grief at what it is hoped is only a temporary separation is alleviated by these pious offerings. Those flowers, so fresh and blooming, lead to the indulgence of a belief that their friends are yet living near them and around them ; and wide spaces of land, especially in the country, are sparkling with a thousand lights placed there by many a mourner to cheer their fainting hearts. Of course mass is said

in every church, and a *messa cantata* will be celebrated in the church at the Campo Santo, at which the municipal body and all in authority will be present."

"From Rome to Palermo," writes Mr. Marion Crawford, "swear at a man if you please, call him by bad names and he will laugh at you. But curse his dead relations or their souls and you had better keep beyond the reach of his knife, or of his hands if he have no weapons."

The *Petit Journal* of the 2nd November last speaks of raising a monument to the memory of French soldiers and sailors who have died during recent colonial expeditions, indicating the great necropolis of Père-Lachaise as the most suitable spot. Here, in fact, "the relatives of those whose remains lie in foreign soil have already taken to placing commemorative tablets '*auprès desquels ils viennent prier, et qu'ils fleuriront aujourd'hui.*'" And is there not something akin to the custom of visiting the Ancestral Hall, to inform Ancestors of current events, in the visit paid (on the *Jour des Morts*), by M. Casimir-Perier and his Ministers to the tomb of President Carnot? They had just attended a service at the Russian church, in honour of the dead Tsar, and "wished," say the French papers, "on the day when France particularly honours her dead, to associate in a common thought the memory of President Carnot and of Alexander III."

Many have probably observed, in churches abroad, an intimation by Pius VI., that an Indulgence of

seven years can be gained by praying "before an image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus exposed to public veneration," with the noteworthy addendum: "This Indulgence is applicable to the souls of Purgatory." Compare the temple at Hangchow, and the rites performed there and elsewhere in China for the benefit of "unconnected" ancestors! It surely needs a special education to perceive why an expression of pious regard in the one case should become an act of idolatry in the other.

In the case of Protestants, the argument from analogy has, of course, less force. "The violence," as Dr. Martin remarks, "which attended their rupture with Rome carried them almost unavoidably to the opposite extreme, leading them to abandon many graceful observances, in themselves as innocent as the painted windows which Puritan soldiers took such delight in smashing." But even Protestantism retains many features of reverence for the dead which might induce sympathy with the cognate observances of others. We have our statues in public squares and churches, our galleries of ancestral portraits, and our great national Walhalla. We have our founders' days at public schools; we have even our fear of ghosts, and traces of a belief that wicked spirits require "laying"! But above all we have that beautiful custom of decorating a grave with flowers which finds expression, in varying shapes, among so many different peoples. "Decoration Day" in the United States,

for instance, scarcely yields to the *Jour des Morts* in the unanimity of observance, though it is of modern origin; for, "throughout the land whole communities gather at the cemeteries . . . to place chaplets and flowers on their dead soldiers' graves."

It is a curious illustration of the opposite views men may take that Mr. Noyes, who can cite this observance with appreciation, thinks "the Church should require its members to set their face like a flint against the (Chinese) form of false worship;"¹ while Dr. Martin asks, "if it is legitimate to deck a grave with flowers, why is it not so to offer fruits or meats?" If it is legitimate, may one not add, to pray beside an English grave—to ask, as many a bereaved girl has done, the spirit of the departed occupant for sympathy and help—why is it wicked in a Chinaman? Why? Why, Dr. Faber² can tell us no less than seventeen distinct forms of evil which the Chinese custom involves! and Dr. Blodget winds up with the striking proposition that "a costly gilded tablet into which a human spirit has been brought by certain ceremonies and imposing the dot, and before which libations and offerings are made, may be as offensive to God as the piece of the skull of his ancestor hung up in the dwelling of a nude savage of the South Sea Islands, to be regarded with superstitious veneration and worshipped

¹ "Records of Shanghai Conference," *ut supra*, p. 610.

² *Ibid.* p. 654.

with debasing rites." Well, of course it may. Still, some few of Dr. Blodget's colleagues hesitate to accept his surmise as a conclusive exposition of the divine thought.

But it may be worth while asking what the Chinese themselves have to say about a subject on which they may surely be supposed to have a glimmering of their own purpose. Archdeacon Moule—to whose thoughtful and sympathetic essay I have been already indebted for several illustrations—explains to a mandarin that missionaries object, to ancestor worship, that "it implies adoration, at any rate the idea that the dead form a kind of intermediate rank and order between living men and the Supreme; that they are intercessors for us with God, and that they must be propitiated by sacrifices and offerings." And what does the mandarin reply? "Sir," he rejoins with emphasis, "you are mistaken. Ancestral worship is not idolatrous. It has not the high significance which you imagine. It implies merely a reverential and affectionate rite in memory of the departed, whom we desire to serve in their absence as though they were still present with us." And the famous Abbé Huc quotes a precisely similar experience :—

One day we asked a mandarin, a friend of ours, who had just offered a sumptuous repast at the tomb of a deceased colleague, whether in his opinion the dead stood in need of food?

"How could you possibly suppose I had such an idea?" he replied with astonishment. "Could you really believe me so stupid as that?"

"But then what is the purpose of these mortuary repasts?"

"We intend to do honour to the memory of our relatives and friends; to show that they still live in our remembrance and that we like to serve them as if they were yet with us. Who could be absurd enough to suppose that the dead need to eat? Amongst the lower class, indeed, many fables are current; but who does not know that rude, ignorant people are always credulous?"

Precisely. And now we will indent on Mr. Elwin for an example of this credulity.

"I saw on one occasion," he says, "a man burning some paper clothes, so I said to him:

"Sir, do the spirits wear paper clothes?"

"No, sir, they do not; these paper clothes, after being burned, become cloth or silk in the next world."

"I said, 'Sir, you have never been there to see; how do you know that these clothes turn into cloth or silk?'"

"The man quietly answered, 'Sir, how do you know they do not?'"

The repartee is delicious; but we are concerned chiefly with the illustration. The educated man did not believe the dead wanted food: the ignorant man did believe they wanted clothes. And we should get, probably, some equally curious results if we went to the ignorant classes in Europe for a definition of many Christian observances. Let us go rather to the fountain head. What says Confucius himself? "The filial pious reverence those whom their fathers honoured (*i.e.* their ancestors), and love those whom they regarded with affection. Thus they serve the dead as they would have served them when alive."

We must get out of the atmosphere of dogma,

and take Mr. Goschen's advice to allow some rein to our imagination, if we would realize the nature of this cult and how deeply it is ingrained in Chinese sentiment and national life. No one denies that it is susceptible of amendment: it would be difficult to find a religious ritual that is not. No one denies that it is obscured by superstitious beliefs; but these are no more integral necessities of the cult than is a belief in the efficacy of relics and masses for the dead to the holding of the Christian faith. Even Ricci admitted that it contains features which require elimination. The remedy lies, however, not in Nihilism but in education; as those larger-minded men perceive who have escaped the terror of appearing to countenance "idolatry" and "false worship" which seemed to dominate, and obscure the judgment of, the majority of the Shanghai Conference.

"When anyone embraces this faith . . . he must first deny his ancestral tablet," is one of the charges against Christianity in the famous Hunan proclamation which led up to the massacre of Tientsin. "Your honourable religion is good," said a literate in conversation, lately, with a member of the English Wesleyan Mission at Wuchang,¹ "but there is one thing you will never get us Chinese to do, and that is to give up the worship of our ancestors." "We cannot enter the Church," said a mandarin otherwise well disposed towards Christianity, to the Rev.

¹ "Records of Shanghai Missionary Conference," p. 697.

J. Ross,¹ in Manchuria, "so long as you forbid absolutely all connection with this ancient custom." "If Protestant Christianity," said a Korean prince,² who had gained access to some Christian literature during a stay in China, "would in some way adapt Ancestor Worship so as to exclude idolatry and superstition," he saw no reason why Korea should not become a Christian country in three years. "Why," asked a mandarin of Archdeacon Moule, in Chekiang, "do you make it an indispensable condition of discipleship in a Chinaman that he should abandon the ceremonials and reverence due to his ancestors? This forms, in the hearts of educated and thoughtful Chinese, a grave cause for suspicion and dislike."

Having laid so much stress on the opinion of educated Chinese, it would be unfair not to add that an ordained Chinese convert, the Rev. Y. K. Yen, has avowed himself an uncompromising opponent of the system. But there is, proverbially, no such enthusiast as a convert; and when Mr. Yen says he would not admit for purposes of remembrance even a Chinese painted likeness or a tablet, but only a photograph with "in paradise" written upon it, we seem to trace something of the spirit which drove the early Christians into extremes of asceticism and iconoclasm, in wild anxiety to get

¹ "Records of Shanghai Missionary Conference," p. 697.

Ibid.

as far as possible away from the creeds they had abandoned.

If we conceive the restraining influence of a cult which involves the conception and practice of excommunication from the family, as a punishment for infamous crime, and conceive that a convert is asked voluntarily to excommunicate himself by abstaining from the ceremonies by which the cult is kept alive, we may be able to conceive also the nature of the barrier which the Churches have erected against themselves. Missionaries who are tempted to declare, in their enthusiasm, that "Ancestor Worship is idolatry and inconsistent with the Christian faith," would do well to remember with Dr. Williamson that they "are touching the very foundation-stones of the Empire and of all its institutions," and how tremendous would be the responsibility of dislocating the structure. The danger, fortunately, seems slight; for the Chinese are clearly as little disposed as they were two centuries ago, to have their cult overthrown. Refused admission into the Churches unless they abandon their ancestral rites, they seem to have little hesitation as to the alternative they will adopt. Even toleration is not a panacea which would magically bring about a general conversion to Christianity, for many other elements of antipathy are present. But it would make so largely for conciliation if the Churches could be persuaded to revise their attitude, that we

may fain hope they will some day perceive the wisdom of the advice—"to refrain from any interference with the native mode of honouring ancestors, and to leave the reformation of the system to the influence of divine truth"—which was tendered by Dr. Martin at the late Conference, but which was outvoiced, at that time, by a regrettable chorus of disapprobation.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE GODDESS OF MERCY.

THE three especially sacred places of Chinese Buddhism are Mount Omei, in Szechuen; Mount Wutai, in Shanse; and the Island of Pootoo, on the eastern edge of the Chusan archipelago, in the Yellow Sea. Pootoo is given up to Buddhist priests. Reversing the order established by Tennyson's "Princess," the very dogs and fowls there are males. Women are allowed to come only on pilgrimages to the temples. Yet it is a female divinity who is the favourite object of worship; for Pootoo is the especial seat of the Goddess Kwon-yin. To the question who or what Kwon-yin is, it might be answered, briefly, that she is the Nature Goddess of the Chinese. There is the Kwon-yin of mystic theosophy, however, as well as the Kwon-yin of popular worship; and in that respect she is identified with Avalokiteshvara, who is one of the favourite abstractions of Northern Buddhism. But it will be time enough to examine the hieratic conception when we have noted the characteristics of the

popular divinity ; and we will concern ourselves for the present with the Chinese goddess only.

Mr. Little,¹ describing a gorge on the Upper Yangtze that has been named after Kwon-yin, says explicitly that she holds in Buddhist worship a position analogous to that of the Holy Virgin in Europe ; and we shall find her exercising all the beneficent functions of Notre-Dame. She resembles the Virgin also in her freedom from sensual taint : it may be worth while remarking, indeed, that Chinese mythology is, in that respect, generally above reproach. She is Queen of Heaven, Protectress of Mariners, Goddess of Mercy. There is, in that very gorge, a temple with mineral baths that may remind us of Lourdes. But it is necessary to make one reservation. She is in no sense Mother of God. It would be difficult to express the resemblance between the theogony of the Light of Asia and that of the Light of the World in language more striking than that used by the Abbé Huc ;² but, how remarkable soever may be the likeness between the attributes of Kwon-yin and those that have come to group themselves around " Our Lady " in Europe, the resemblance ceases when we come back to the personality of the Virgin Mary. Maia

¹ "Through the Yangtze Gorges," p. 288.

² Soutadanna, chief of the house of Shakia, . . married Mahamaia . . . but did not consummate his marriage with her. She, a virgin, conceived by divine influence, and, on the 15th day of the second month of spring, brought into the world a son.— "The Chinese Empire," vol. ii. chap. v.

the mother of Buddha has not been so exalted, and has nothing to do with the Goddess Kwon-yin. The real likeness may be discerned in the following anecdote :—

When about to start for Europe, in 1871, to express the Emperor's regret for the massacre of French subjects at Tientsin, Chung How wrote back from Fohkien to ask that some special mark of honour might be conferred on the Queen of Heaven. He had, he said, had constant opportunities during his official career of perceiving to what an extent the coasting craft depend on her grace, "each vessel having on board a tablet inscribed to her." During his passage down the coast he had observed, afresh, how many thousands derive support from labour on the sea. "Whether as fishermen or salt-collectors, they work day and night, in tempest and amid the waves. . . The importance of the traffic by sea is enormous, whether between the Chinese ports or with foreign countries. . . Wherefore it is begged that an honorific epithet may be conferred upon the goddess, and that offerings may be regularly made at her altars, whereby the people will be led to display increased reverence to her." The title Queen of Heaven (Tien-how) suggests a question of identity on which we shall have to remark later on. Our present point is that Chung How is referring gratefully to the protection she affords sailors ; and his memorial may remind us of Henry III. making vows to Notre-Dame de Boulogne, while waiting for

a favourable wind to carry him to England, or of Godfrey de Bouillon sending back relics from Jerusalem to her shrine.

Now that we have gained a glimpse of the esoteric conception, let us visit the Lady of popular legend at her favourite shrine in the Eastern Sea. Venus was worshipped everywhere; but she preferred Cyprus. Kwon-yin is worshipped everywhere; but she prefers Pootoo. It appears, then, that Kwon-yin was, according to this legend, the third daughter of a man named Shi-kin, who dwelt among the Tsu-ling mountains.

“By spiritual transformation, she was again born as the daughter of the King Miao-chwang. Growing up, she refused to marry, and was subjected by her father to laborious drudgery as a punishment. Finding that this did not shake her resolution, her father ordered her to be put to death. After many escapes and Divine interposition, she was strangled with a long red silken cloth; but a large tiger suddenly appeared and carried her corpse to a forest of black fir-trees. Her spirit visited Hades. Under the guidance and protection of the kings of hell, she visited the infernal regions and witnessed the torments that were being endured. These kings then escorted her to Mang-po-ting, and subsequently by their orders she was conducted back to the forest of black firs, where her spirit was restored to her. On awaking she saw Buddha riding on the clouds and making obeisances. After making herself known, Buddha commanded her to go to the country of Yu (now part of the province of Chekeang), and live in the Isle of Pootoo near the southern seas, promising to call on the dragons of the earth to create a water-lily stand upon which she could cross the sea. Arrived at Pootoo, she was assisted by a white tiger and the protecting god Kea-lan, in preparing a dwelling and grounds. Eight dragon kings took charge of the rising tides day and night. She lived in the Isle of Pootoo for nine years, and, having already attained perfection, on

one occasion she cut the flesh from her arm in order to preserve her father from illness. Also, in a mysterious way, she secured long life for the people. Seeing that Kwon-yin's merit filled the world, and that her miracles were everywhere manifest, the Emperor canonized her as the Goddess of Mercy and Compassion, giving her a water-lily for her throne, and the sovereignty of Pootoo in the Southern Sea.

The legend has been told, with variations, by several writers ; but I have preferred a version contributed to *The North-China Herald* by a well-known sinologue, after a visit to the island, during which he had interested himself in its verification ! It presents difficulties to the European mind, and probably fails to commend itself, as strictly and literally exact, to educated Chinese. As usual in such cases, however, a certain measure of comprehension may be arrived at through mythology. The dragon, for example—which was in China centuries before Buddha was born—plays a large part in Chinese fable. The Emperor sits on the Dragon Throne ; and when he dies he “ mounts the dragon and ascends on high,” just as the Mikado flies upward on the sacred stork. The dragon is concerned, too, in everything that relates to water ; being, with its congener the snake, an object of frequent worship in time of flood or storm. Only last summer, when rain was badly wanted in the neighbourhood of Chinkiang, a deputation of the inhabitants, headed by an assistant magistrate, went to a hill about fifty miles off, where some dragons were were said to reside, and solemnly brought back one (looking, it is said, to the ordinary eye remark-

ably like a small lizard) with a view to propitiating the Rain-god by his help. Tigers also play a large part in Chinese fable. A popular proverb says that "dragons bring clouds, and tigers bring winds." They are always carrying off into the mountains people who reappear at critical moments. There is one well-known tale of a man and wife fleeing into the desert during a rebellion. A tiger appears, and they run away, leaving their child behind in their terror. The tiger bears the child to its cave, nourishes it, and hands it over, when grown up, to some neighbouring villagers. The tiger is worshipped, too, in connection with the Goddess of Children, who is often represented as sitting upon the back of a tiger; and the care of children is one of Kwon-yin's especial functions.

Cutting out a piece of one's own flesh, to administer to a parent in illness, is, as we have already seen, an act of high merit. *The Peking Gazette* contained an edict, last year, permitting the Governor of Shanse to erect a memorial arch in honour of a lady who had, in childhood, saved her mother's life by cutting flesh from her body and mixing it with medicine, and, after vainly trying to save her husband by the same expedient, had now committed suicide in despair. In face of the celibate ideal which has been exalted by a Christian hierarchy, and finds similar expression in Buddhism, Kwon-yin's refusal to marry scarcely needs comment; but it must be noted, in explanation of the father's conduct, that it stands con-

demned by Confucianism as contrary to nature and common-sense. The excursion to Pootoo upon a water-lily raft is more poetical, and scarcely less credible, than the arrival of Notre-Dame de Boulogne from Asia in a boat without sails or oars. Besides, the water-lily is the sacred plant of Buddhists, as it was of the ancient Egyptians.

The taste of the early Christians seems to have run on flat delineations; their anxiety being, apparently, to evade the charge that image-worship was a renewal of pagan idolatry. Chinese gods, however, are almost invariably represented by statues of gilded wood or clay. It is a little remarkable, therefore, to find in the Pootze temple, which ranks nominally chief among the scores that dot the hills and valleys of Pootoo, a simple etching of Kwon-yin on a flat black stone. There is an appropriate legend, too. In a book which might almost rival Canon Le Roy's history of Notre-Dame de Boulogne, it is recorded that during the reign of Liang Chen-ming (early in the tenth century), a Japanese priest who had been on a pilgrimage to Wutai started back for his own country, bearing with him an image of Kwon-yin. During the voyage his boat got foul of a rock surrounded by lotus flowers, and was unable to proceed. So he prayed, saying, "Should it be fated that the living multitudes of my country be debarred from seeing you, O Goddess, let it then be so, and your servant will build his hut wheresoever it pleaseth you." Immediately the boat began to move, and drifted to

a certain cavern in Pootoo ! A man dwelling on the shore noted the incident and, marvelling, gave up his house to the priest, who converted it into a temple.

At the risk of spoiling the point, I must honestly admit that I cannot affirm the identity of the two images. There is no question, however, as to the repute in which the former is held ; for the supply of tracings appears to be as much a matter of consideration as that of silver shrines at Ephesus, or of medals of Notre-Dame on the occasion of her autumn festival. It is partly, no doubt, from sheer slovenliness, partly for ease of access, that the image stands on the floor behind the principal altar, exposed with a carelessness that would seem inconceivable in a Western church. Chinese notions about images however, as about most other things, are peculiar. To read Colonel Fisher's description¹ of a Chinaman "scraping the gilt off a big clay joss that had been turned out of a temple" in Canton, one would fancy they must have solved the difficulty of distinguishing between an image and the person represented. Yet one hears, on the other hand, of their inflicting personal chastisement on an idol that has neglected to fulfil their requests !

Being peculiarly interested in mariners, Kwon-yin is naturally an object of special worship by fishermen at Pootoo. One of the prettiest sights to be witnessed along the Chinese coast is the gathering on the opposite mainland, under the

¹ "Three Years' Service in China," 1863.

heights of Chinhai, of the fishing fleet which starts every spring from the mouth of the Yung river for the season's work in those waters. The boats are ranged along the shore by hundreds, looking as bright as paint can make them, and each flying a neat little flag from the stern. These are red, white, and blue, like admirals' flags in the British navy, presumably to indicate the division, or the guild, to which they belong. It is said that some 4000 boats, each with an average crew of five men, are employed in the cuttle fishery alone off this coast. One who chances to be at Pootoo at the time they start may see them passing out by hundreds, between the islands, into the open sea. I counted 500 within an hour as I lay basking in the sunshine on one of the hill-tops. Hundreds had come in the previous night, blowing conch shells to each other in salute, and anchored round the south of the island. The crews had landed in the morning, to pray to Our Lady of Pootoo for good luck, and had ever since been streaming out to sea. Might we not be reading of Mediterranean coral-fishers doing homage to Madonna di Carmela, before setting out to join the fleet which musters every spring at Genoa or Leghorn?

If Pootoo is a special object of pilgrimage, Kwon-yin is not the less widely and generally worshipped on the mainland. Here, on the adjacent coast—in the great city of which the Chinese say—

“Shang yu Tien T'ang
Hia yu Su Hang,”

—the purport of which is that Hangchow and Suchow below are equal to Paradise above—there stands a temple, dedicated to the Queen of Heaven, that has peculiar interest as a memento of the ecclesiastical quarrels that we have been reviewing. When Pope Clement banned ancestor worship, the Emperor, as we have seen, banned Christianity. During the persecution that ensued, much mission property was confiscated, and this building was then converted from a Tien-chu tang to a Tien-how kung—from a church to the Lord of Heaven under the Roman Catholic dispensation, to a temple to the Queen of Heaven in the Chinese Pantheon. The incident was recorded by Li Wei, the then Viceroy of Fohkien and Chekeang, in an elaborate inscription,¹ which winds up with the following exhortation :—

“ Let us then do away with that (or those) who spread these disorderly or unenlightened ideas, and present the temple to a being who has a beneficial influence on humanity. . . . The name, surname, and generation of Tien-how are written in the books, and though implicit belief cannot be placed in them, yet there are traditions which have been handed down by various Emperors of

¹ A full translation will be found in the *Journal of the North-China Branch of the R.A.S.* for 1867. It is interesting as expressing the sentiments which inspired the conversion, for the view it sets forth of the errors of missionary teaching, and especially for its condemnation of the prohibition of Ancestral Worship. The missionaries required converts to burn the tablets of their ancestors, whereon the Viceroy exclaims, “ But, since Heaven created man and the universe, it was he who created parents and ancestors ; then what pleasure can the burning of them afford him ? ”

our dynasties, and even foreign nations have shown their respect for her by the frequency of their offerings, and by the numbers that have attended festivals in her honour. Owing to her protection, fishers and traders have travelled over the ocean billows and stormy surf, with a fixed day for going and returning, as safely as if they were navigating the rivers, bays, and creeks. The spirit of Tien-how has watched over them. Yea, her spirit, all-pervading, has been a beneficial influence working vastly for humanity. . . . Then let us do away with false doctrine, and change the abode [of the Christian religion] into a temple. Let us destroy their execrable idols in order to make room for proper ones, that hereafter the eyes of the Hangchow people may no longer see the abode, nor their ears hear the name of Tien-chu."

We have only to suppose the usual prominence to have been given to the Virgin in the Christian church, to appreciate the significance of its re-consecration. It is the Queen of Heaven in both instances. Substitute a "proper" (a Chinese) image for an "execrable" (a Roman) one, and the transmutation is accomplished.

"It is evident," writes Professor Max Müller,¹ "that in countries where the powers of nature are the objects of worship, the same power is liable to be called by very different names. This is especially likely to be the case when the population is distributed over a large extent of country, with local worships under the superintendence of priesthoods independent of each other. The myths arising either from the name of the god or from the phenomena which he personified, would necessarily vary according to locality." And so we find that

¹ "Physical Religion."

the myths and personifications of Kwon-yin vary in different parts of China. We have seen her in her highest attributes as Goddess of Mercy and Protectress of Mariners, at Pootoo; we have visited her as Queen of Heaven at Hangchow. It is at a temple to the Queen of Heaven that distinguished officials are lodged when passing through Shanghai: for Chinese temples have many of the characteristics of mediæval monasteries in Europe. A temple to the Queen of Heaven (built by the Fohkien guild) is one of the things best worth seeing at Ningpo. A recent number of *The Peking Gazette* mentions that, at the launch of a new steamer from the Foochow Naval Yard, sacrifices were offered to Tien-how, and to the Spirits of the River, of the Earth, and of Ships.

And this brings us to the especial Lady whom Chung How was anxious to honour; for Tien-how is identified with a Goddess of Sailors named Ma Chu, whose cult may remind us closely of the Mediterranean sailors' devotion to Madonna. Her legend is told, with local variations, from Fohkien to Shantung; but as we started on our quest with Chung How, we will indent on Dr. Doolittle for the version current at Foochow.¹ Ma Chu, then, was the daughter of a man who, with his sons, was a sailor on the coast of Fohkien. One day while she was

¹ A similar miracle is ascribed, in Shantung, to a girl who lived in the neighbourhood of Ai-shan, where a temple has been erected in her honour: only, by local variation, this lady saved her father, but lost her lover.—*Vide* Mrs. Williamson's "Old Highways in China."

engaged in weaving she fell asleep through weariness, and her head rested on her loom. She dreamed that she saw her father and her two brothers on separate junks, in a terrific storm. Exerting herself to rescue them, she seized with her mouth upon the junk which contained her father, while with her hands she caught a firm hold of those which contained her brothers. As she was dragging them all towards the shore, she heard the voice of her mother calling; and, forgetting that she held the junk by her mouth, she hastily opened it to answer. She awoke in great distress; and, lo! in a few days news came that the fleet comprising the family junks had encountered a fearful storm, and that the one in which her father was had been wrecked, while those of her brothers had been signally rescued. She became in consequence one of the most popular objects of worship in the Empire. Sailors often take with them, to sea, some embers or ashes which they obtain from a censer before her image. When there is a violent storm, and there seems but little hope that the junk will outride it, they kneel down with incense in their hands and call upon Ma Chu to send deliverance; and then, if they reach port without disaster, they offer her special thanksgivings and presents according to their vow. Do we not again seem to hear the Mediterranean sailors calling on Madonna for help?

Another favourite "Lady" of the Southern Chinese is Ling Chiu-na, whom we find worshipped also at Foochow as Goddess of Midwifery and

Children. But, as we are concerned rather with the broad features than with details of the cult, let us turn to the following picture of a temple in Manchuria, where the Queen of Heaven and the Queen of the Seas are merged in Nôtre-Dame de Miséricorde. "Go," Mr. James¹ writes, "into a temple of Buddha. You will find in the centre of the chancel, Buddha himself sitting cross-legged and majestic. . . In the shrine adjoining stands the figure of the Queen of Heaven, the babe embracing Niang-niang or Goddess of Mercy, bearing a striking likeness to a Madonna; and on each side a series of copies of herself on a smaller scale—one holding two babies in her arms, another a single baby, a third displaying a human eye between her thumb and forefinger, a fourth a human ear; a fifth is represented as rubbing her stomach, and so on; so that whoever wants an heir, or suffers from ophthalmia, or what not, can worship the appropriate figure." This may be carrying subdivision to a rather ludicrous extreme; but whether variety of attribute be best expressed by reduplication of the image in one temple, or by variety of ascription in different localities, is only a question of degree. Our Lady is worshipped in one capacity at Capri, and in another at Lourdes. Mr. James simply finds the impersonation carried a stage further, and the Healing Goddess herself subdivided to simplify the task of the invalid.

¹ "A Visit to Manchuria." By H. E. James, H.M.I.C.S.

A French journal called *La Croix* published, some time ago, an account of a series of miracles connected with the pilgrimage to Lourdes. Paralytics walk and run, dropsy is reduced, and cancerous wounds are cicatrized, when the sufferer is plunged in the miraculous water; while the competitive and intercepted cures by Ste. Radegonde sound remarkably like a parallel subdivision of the functions of Nôtre-Dame. There are, of course, various ways of looking at all this. There is the good healthy Protestant notion of explicit disbelief; there is the equally implicit belief of the devotee, that it all did happen through the miraculous influence of Our Lady; while the man of science would require an antecedent diagnosis, by a qualified medical man, of the precise conditions of the invalid before starting, and an equally exact statement of what really happened at Lourdes; and would then ascribe so much of the result to bathing in medicinal water, and so much, perhaps, to the "influence" and conviction which Dr. Bernheim has found so efficacious at Nancy. The Chinese are not, I think, prone to emotion of the kind required to work faith cures; neither are they given to consider medicated water a miraculous agency; but they must have some belief in the curative power of the Goddess of Mercy, or they would scarcely set up images for purposes of prayer.

They have, at any rate, abundance of superstition in other respects, and can recount marvels of their

own which vie with those of the most credulous of nations. Here, from our Pootoo Guide-book, is one that Baronius himself could scarcely surpass. A certain gourmand Emperor, in days long past, had a passion for shell-fish, of which he compelled the fishermen to send a large yearly tribute. One day, in preparing his usual meal, the servants came across a cockle which they had great difficulty in opening. When, eventually, they succeeded, they found in it some writing by Kwon-yin, which a Buddhist priest at Court interpreted as a warning to the Emperor that the good things of this life should be enjoyed with moderation. The Emperor accepted the lesson, and abolished the tribute; and the renown of Kwon-yin multiplied exceedingly. Now, there are various ways of looking at this also. It is possible to reject the story as a fabrication: it is possible to surmise that a priest found it in his conscience to contrive a pious fraud. Certain discoveries at Pompeii and the story of the rood of Boxley seem to indicate that such tricks have been played, to enhance the effect of moral teaching. If statues of Minerva could brandish spears and those of Venus weep, to impress worshippers, surely Kwon-yin might write a sermon in a cockle! Was there not preserved at Cardigan, till within comparatively modern days, an image of the Virgin which had been found standing at the mouth of the Tivy river with an infant Christ in her lap and a burning taper in her hand? Did she not return again and again to the spot where she was first

found, until a chapel was built to receive her? Did she not stay there with the taper burning, yet not consuming, until some rash Welshman swore an oath by her and broke it—when the taper went out and could not be kindled again—until the Reformation, when it somehow turned out to be only painted wood?¹ Where shall we stop, if we attempt to penetrate the arcana of human belief and avowal? The tale of the cockle goes, at any rate, to show that the reverence which the Chekeang fishermen pay to their Lady of Pootoo is based upon mutual consideration, and is by no means undeserved.

It was to Chekeang that Kwon-yin was directed to proceed: which is another way, perhaps, of saying that Chekeang is a chief seat of her worship. The Chusan archipelago, to which Pootoo belongs, is an appanage of Chekeang, and Hangchow is the chief city of the province. Her cult, however, is as widespread as her attributes are varied. A recent visitor to Mount Omei describes the number of temples and pilgrims, and the general impressiveness of the scene; and adds "there is Kwon-yin over and over again—like a Byzantine Virgin and child—with a very sweet face; and women come and pray for children, and carry away little dolls." Mr. Thomson finds² her enthroned again, in the interior of Kwangtung, under conditions which we might think, in Europe, betokened the former presence of a nymph, and which associate them-

¹ Froude's "History of England," ch. xv. p. 287.

² "Malacca China, and Indo-China."

selves, even there, with her characteristic as Goddess of Water. About 200 miles from the city of Canton there "is a celebrated grotto formed out of a natural cave at the foot of a limestone precipice which rears its head high above the stream. The mouth of the cavern opens on the water's edge, and the interior has been enlarged so as to render it suitable for a Buddhist shrine. A broad granite platform, surmounted by a flight of steps, leads into an upper chamber, and there the goddess may be seen seated on a huge lotus-flower sculptured (so they tell us) by no human hands."

Chinese common sense would, I believe, recoil from the idea of hostile armies arraying against each other antagonistic images of the same personality, as was done during the Mexican revolution against Spain. Not even the plains of Troy, when—

"The quivered Dian, sister of the Day,
(Her golden armour sounding at her side)
Saturnia Majesty of Heaven defied,"

offer a more striking picture of hostile goddesses than the Mexican patriot Hidalgo fighting under the flag of Nuestra Señora di Guadalupe, while the Spanish royalists persecute all who worship at her shrine and stamp on their own banners a representation of *their* Señora de los Remedios.¹ The idea of help being rendered by warlike divinities in case of emergency is, however, by no means unfamiliar. Kuan Te, the Mars of China, was seen all

¹ See Mrs. Gooch's "Face to Face with the Mexicans."

through the Taeping rebellion in cities which the rebels did not take ; and we find Kwon-yin, also, as *Nôtre-Dame des Victoires*. Shortly before the capture of Canton by the English, Yeh reported that, at a critical conjuncture in a recent contest with brigands, she had been seen beckoning from the sky to the Imperial troops, which were thus inspired with courage to gain the victory.

It struck Mr. Colquhoun¹ as strange at first, "that the worship of national or local deities such as he witnessed in his journey across Southern China should be allowed by the Buddhist priests" ; but he soon learned "that the latter had no scruples on the subject, but had allowed numberless superstitions to be grafted on to their dogmas, and had taken innumerable deities into their mythology." The small coin which, in Japan, is put in the mouth of a dead Buddhist, to pay his fare across the Sandzu, betokens a receptivity as catholic as that of Cyprian Christianity which tolerates the coin of Charon. Mount Omei was sacred before Buddhism was preached, and the legends of Ma Chu and Ah-yune are as poetic as those told, in Europe, of the Ladies who have here superseded nereids and nymphs.

It would have been more surprising, indeed, if China had offered an exception to the rule. Is there not in Rome a church dedicated to San Teodoro, whither the Roman matrons carry their children to

¹ "Across Chrysaë."

be cured, just as their forbears carried children to the temple of Romulus, which has been supposed by antiquaries to have stood on the site? Does not all Paris visit Père Lachaise on the "Jour des Morts," just as the Romans were wont to visit the tombs of their ancestors in the days of yore? If it were not that, already in Solomon's time, the fact had become evident not only that "there is no new thing under the sun," but that "there is no remembrance of former things with those that come after," the wonder would rather seem to be that the origin is so soon forgotten. One of the most advanced of modern Japanese recently used the fact as an argument for promoting the adoption of Christianity as a State religion. Nothing, he considered, would tend so much to facilitate the admission of the Empire on equal terms into the comity of European nations; and the people would soon learn to go on worshipping their national deities as saints in the new system. It was, for him, a question not of religious verity but purely of political expediency; and we can hardly deny the worldly wisdom, even if we shrink from the cynicism, of the remark. At any rate,—Tien-how or Regina Cœli, Kwon-yin or Our Lady of Mercy, Ma Chu or Nôtre-Dame Auxiliatrice—those who respect the various impersonations of Our Lady in the West may hardly condemn the yearnings for the sympathy of a female deity that are to be discerned in the Far East.

Students invite us into the arcana of Buddhism, and identify Kwon-yin with Avalokiteshvara, whom

they place little lower than Budh. She is, in that conception, of dual sex; being, as a female, daughter of Amitabha whom Chinese Buddhists worship as O-me-to Fu. But that way madness lies; and we are grateful to Mr. Beale¹ for suggesting an explanation, in the double worship of Mithras as the Sun and of Nancea as the Goddess of Water, so widely diffused throughout Central Asia, which may, he thinks, have given rise to the Buddhist conception of Amitabha (boundless light), and of Avalokiteshvara (Kwon-yin), who has several of the attributes of the Mithraic Goddess. The surmise fails, perhaps, only in not going far enough. There is, Madame Ragozin remarks,² in her sympathetic sketch of the Chaldæan religion, "a distinction—the distinction of sex, which runs through the whole of animated nature, dividing all things that have life into two separate halves—male and female—halves most different in their qualities, yet eternally dependent on each other. . . . The ancient thinkers—priests—who framed the vague guesses of the groping dreaming mind into schemes and systems of profound meaning, expressed this sense of the twofold nature of things by worshipping a double divine being or principle, masculine and feminine. . . . And as all the gods were in reality only different names and forms of the Supreme and unfathomable One, so all the goddesses represent Belit, the great feminine principle of nature—pro-

¹ "Buddhism in China."

² "Chaldæa": "Stories of the Nations Series."

ductiveness, maternity, tenderness. Hence it comes that the goddesses of the Chaldæo-Babylonian religion, though different in name and apparently in attributions, become wonderfully alike when looked at closer. They are all repetitions more or less of Belit, the wife of Bel. Her name, meaning 'The Lady,' as Bel means 'The Lord,' sufficiently shows that the two are really one." Does not Avalokiteshvara, represented sometimes as a male and sometimes as a female, offer an analogous picture? And do not all the Chinese goddesses, when looked at more closely, appear reduplications of Kwon-yin?

There remains another conception, which may bring the likeness still more closely home. Although no attempt has been made to deify the mother of Shakyamuni, Buddhism has evolved the conception of a Mother Buddha. Baron Richtofen visited a very ancient temple to her, excavated in the solid rock, in the province of Honan; and Dr. Edkins found her in high repute on the sacred mountain Wutai, where she sits, like the Kwon-yin we saw in Kwangtung, on a lotus-flower dais. At Wutai, however, we are approaching Lama land, and approximate more nearly to the conception of Avalokiteshvara. Mother Buddha (Mu Fo) with the Chinese, she is called Dara Ehe, and Ehe Borhan, by the Mongols. In a temple specially devoted to her honour, Dr. Edkins¹ found "two

¹ "The Religions of China."

great halls ; one containing a statue of Buddha and the other twenty-one metamorphoses of Dara, all in sitting shape, arms and chest bare, the right arm touching the lotus-flower dais on which she sits, while a large glory forms a back screen, and she wears the Poosa crown of leaves on each of which there is a picture of Buddha."

We find here, without doubt, Avalokiteshvara in process of migration from the banks of the Indus to those of the Yangtze, and in course of adaptation to Chinese ideas. And if we have gained, through Mme. Ragozin, a clearer glimpse of the nature and origin of the various impersonations we shall be prepared, probably, to conclude with Dr. Eitel¹ that "all the names, and all the legends connected with them, express one and the same circle of ideas : that Kwon-yin is the god or goddess who has a thousand arms and a thousand eyes and a merciful heart ; that she listens with compassion to the prayers of all who are in any distress of body or mind, especially, however, extending a saving hand to those who are in danger on the sea ; that she is invisible head and ruler of the present Buddhist Church, appearing now and then in the form of man or woman to interfere on behalf of the faithful, to establish the doctrine of the paradise of the West, and to save souls from hell."

The thought may suggest itself that the Roman propaganda has a certain advantage in addressing a

¹ "Buddhism." By E. J. Eitel.

people impregnated with such a curiously cognate doctrine. It is not surprising, therefore, to learn from Mr. Little that temples to Sheng-mu (God-mother) have been set up as rivals to those of Mu Fo (Mother Buddha), which express one of the conceptions of Kwon-yin. Nor, if that were the only obstacle in its path, would a hierarchy which admits the veneration at Loretto of a house brought by angels from Galilee,¹ and which has inaugurated, comparatively lately, the annual pilgrimage to Nôtre-Dame de Lourdes, find very serious difficulty in incorporating the legends and attributes of Mu Fo and Tien-how, of Ma Chu and Our Lady of Pootoo.

It has been impressed upon us by frequent iteration how remarkably "opposite" are the nations of the Far East, and we need scarcely be surprised to find that the peculiarity extends to the location of the altars of Kwon-yin. When the existence of such a saviour was accepted, Mr. Beale says,² speaking of her in the highest esoteric conception, the Buddhist priests began to arrange an office for her express worship. It is commonly called the liturgy of Kwon-yin, and bears a singular likeness to similar

¹ There is (at Mount Omei) a wonderful bronze Pusa riding on a colossal bronze elephant, each of its feet standing in a lotus flower. This is in a temple with a dome made of brick (very unusual in China), and said never to have been built, but to have "come," like N. D. de Loretto, in a single night.—*Vide* "Mount Omei and Beyond," in *North-China Herald*, 6th August, 1892.

² "A Catena of Buddhist Scriptures."

Christian compilations, beginning with a prayer of entrance, and going through lections, confessions, and dismissal. "The image of the Omnipotent and Omniscient" deity is, however, ordered to be "placed reverently in the Western quarter of the temple, facing the East."

Still, there are likenesses as well as contrasts. Curiously diverse reasons have been assigned for the striking resemblances between Buddhism and Christianity. There are those who hold that Sir Edwin Arnold has given us a faithful picture of the Eastern creed; others affirm that it is drawn with a pencil dipped in Christian colour. Sir Lepel Griffin assumes¹ that the Western Church has drawn largely from Eastern ceremonial; Dr. Eitel affirms that almost every tint of Christian colouring which Buddhist tradition gives to the life of Buddha is of comparatively modern origin, and probably derived from early Christian missionaries. Then Huc,² who seems at one time disposed to uphold that surmise, ends by discerning in the Lama incarnations a sheer device of the devil "who sustained Simon Magus"! It seems unnecessary to seek any such topical explanation of the resemblance between the attributes of the Holy Virgin and those of Kwon-yin. We shall be rather inclined to think probably, with Professor Max Müller, that "the

¹ "The Burman and His Creed," *The Fortnightly Review*, October, 1890.

² "Souvenirs d'un Voyage dans la Tartarie," vol. i. chap. viii.

real coincidences not only between Christianity and Buddhism, but between all religions, tell a different tale"; teaching us rather that they "all spring from the same soil—the human heart, and all look to the same ideals."

CHAPTER XIV.

JUDICIAL TORTURE.

WHEN it was found necessary, some years ago, to introduce into the Legislative Council of Hong Kong a Bill to improve the law relating to the rendition of Chinese criminals, opposition was offered on the ground that it was delivering them over to probable torture. The objection was overridden, for the simple reason that extradition is obligatory by treaty, and that it is a necessity of the situation unless Hong Kong is to be a sanctuary for the worst criminals of Canton. A pledge is taken from the Viceroy, in every case, that torture shall not be used; and that seems at present the only possible precaution; though no one, at least in Hong Kong, seems to believe very much in its validity.

The incident is noted, however, without any intention of discussing the political or sentimental aspects of the extradition question—to which, as to most questions, there are various sides; but simply as illustrating a certain phase of Chinese thought and custom. The idea of torture serving to elicit

truth seems to us so ridiculous that we are apt to forget scarcely two hundred years have elapsed since it was commonly practised in Europe, and that witches were tortured and burnt so late as the seventeenth century, even in Great Britain.¹ It has been said, indeed, that we must go back to the days of the Tudors or the Stuarts in order to estimate the Chinese civilization of to-day; and though the comparison is imperfect, it may serve for purposes of illustration. Even the Chinese have never, that I am aware, been so foolish as to tear out a man's nails with pincers to make him confess witchcraft. What they do is bad enough, but it is based on some sort of reason and logic. Chinese law requires confession as a preliminary to punishment. The rule is not without exceptions, but they only prove its existence; and the practice of torture follows almost as a necessary consequence. What could, in fact, seem more plausible to the early law-giver, than to provide for the safety of the innocent by laying down that no one should be punished till he admitted guilt? Obviously no innocent person would make such admission: therefore no innocent person could be punished! The logic is transparent. And when the second consequence—that, if a man

¹ Dr. Fian's legs were broken in the boot, and his finger-nails torn out with pincers, in Scotland, under the personal superintendence of our King James I. (Lecky's "*Rise and Influence of Rationalism*," vol. i. p. 104). Torture was legally abolished in France only in 1789, though it had been discontinued for some time previously.

could not be punished till he confessed, no guilty man would confess at all—became practically apparent, the conclusion that he must be made to confess would as naturally follow: for would not such refusal be rank contumacy? A very similar course of reasoning would justify the “punishment” of witnesses who prevaricate, or eschew the truth. And so, gradually, the use of torture would become habitual. Even when the opening for oppression and injustice came to be recognized, this difficulty would remain: if you abolish torture, how are you to obtain confession? And if the alternative of abolishing confession ever suggested itself, the thought of having to decide by evidence alone among a people prone to bear false witness would hinder its adoption. It has been said that an Englishman must live for a while in the East, to understand the Ninth Commandment. He would, at any rate, be soon convinced that the idea of attaining the desired end by threat of punishment for perjury belongs to a state of society and a habit of thought widely different from those prevailing in the Celestial Empire.

But it may be well to let Chinese law speak for itself; and reference must be made for this purpose to a work called the “*Ta-tsing Leu Le*,”¹ which, with its appendices, embodies the Penal Code of the Empire. *Ta-tsing*, it may be mentioned, is the

¹ “The *Ta-tsing Leu Le*. Being the Fundamental Laws, &c., of China.” By Sir George Staunton. London, 1810.

name of the reigning dynasty; *Leu* may perhaps be explained as the cardinal principles of law which have come down from antiquity; and *Le* as the subsidiary enactments and instructions which have been promulgated from time to time, and which figure as supplementary clauses. The crude prescriptions of the original code have been thus modified and toned down during successive reigns, with the advance of thought and civilization; and local feeling has still farther modified the practice in different sections of the Empire. But the "Ta-tsing Leu Le" must, with these qualifications, be taken to express the leading principles of Chinese judicial theory and practice. And Section 404 clearly recognizes the practice of torture in the provision that—

"It shall not, in any tribunal of Government, be permitted to put the question by torture to those who belong to any of the eight privileged classes, in consideration of the respect due to their character; to those who have attained their seventieth year, in consideration of their advanced age; to those who have not exceeded their fifteenth year, out of indulgence to their tender youth; nor, lastly, to those who labour under any permanent disease or infirmity, out of commiseration for their situation and sufferings. In all such cases the offence of the parties accused shall be determined on the evidence of facts and witnesses alone."

While an edict by the Emperor Kanghi explicitly directs that, in those cases where the use of torture is allowed, the offender, whenever he contumaciously refuses to confess the truth, shall forthwith be put to the question by torture, and it shall be

lawful to repeat the operation a second time if he still refuses to make a confession.

The Chinese mind delights in exactitude, in theory and on paper, and we may dismiss for the present the question whether the limitation is always observed. We have been concerned only to establish the principle, and may go on, now, to examine the procedure which the law authorizes in pursuance of its own theory. First comes flogging. The chief implement both of punishment and torture in the Chinese courts is the "bamboo." Two kinds, the light and the heavy, and the dimensions of each, are exactly prescribed. They are to be in shape straight, polished pieces of bamboo about six feet long, widening, the lighter from one to one and a half inches, and the heavier from one and a half to two inches broad; and weighing respectively about two pounds and two and three-quarter pounds. These sound, and must have been, fearful weapons. They are, however, I believe, now seldom used; a third and much lighter implement, about three feet long, two inches wide and half an inch thick, being now commonly employed. But this is in constant use. Mr. Thomas Taylor Meadows' description of "the almost unceasing flail-like sounds of beating with the bamboo, either as a punishment for ascertained guilt or to extort confession and evidence," as among the most striking features of a Chinese *yamên*,¹ may be open

¹ "The Chinese and their Civilization."

to a suspicion of rhetorical flourish ; but it unquestionably introduces a salient feature in Chinese judicial procedure. Witnesses are bamboosed to make them speak the truth ; accused persons are bamboosed to make them confess ; and culprits are bamboosed when they have been found guilty. I knew, some years ago, in Shanghai, an Irishman who was employed by an owner of Chinese house property as rent-collector. If the tenants were slack in paying, he "banged it out of them." The method did not commend itself to his employer, who gave him an early opportunity to experiment upon his countrymen in Kerry. Yet he was not, after all, so completely without justification. He was only misapplying a recognized theory of Chinese law. For the mandarins do literally and precisely set themselves to "bang" the truth out of their countrymen. A man is given a hundred blows for stealing an umbrella ; a hundred blows to quicken his perception when he is prevaricating. The presiding mandarin throws to the attendants a certain number of bamboo slips, each representing five blows ; and in a trice the culprit is lying on his face with a lictor sitting on his shoulders, another on his feet, and the executioner squatted alongside raining down on the back of the thighs a ceaseless monotonous shower of blows of exactly equal strength, which he counts aloud as he proceeds. At Sungkiang, in the old days of the Ever-Victorious army, I have seen any number of blows from thirty to three hundred given by way of disciplinary correc-

tion. The effect must be decidedly unpleasant, but it is only as the higher numbers are reached that it becomes serious. Gradually, under prolonged flogging, the flesh becomes blue, black, and the surface operated on begins to rise and stand out, like a solid blister, from the surrounding area. The skin is, however, in ordinary cases, rarely broken. It is only in the case of great criminals that the punishment or torture, as the case may be, is carried to the point of laceration. Four dozen with an English cat would be more effective, probably, than any amount of ordinary bambooning.

The thighs are, as we have seen, the usual objects of attention; but the hand of a petty thief, the mouth of a false witness, or the feet of a recalcitrant culprit are occasionally selected. I remember some gentlemen who had been travelling among the hills of Chekeang mentioning, on their return, that they had chanced upon a case of foot-beating during their excursion. Finding difficulty in getting coolies to carry their baggage up the Tien-mu-shan, they had sought the help of the local mandarin, whom they found engaged with his whole *posse comitatus* making an arrest in a neighbouring village. Nor was it till they had followed him back to his yamên, and witnessed a preliminary examination of the culprit under the bastinado, that they could obtain his attention.

So much for the "light bamboo," which is, as we have seen, the common instrument of correction and

persuasion : it must not be forgotten, however, that the heavier weapons exist, and are used in cases of serious crime.

There is a clause in the "Ta-tsing Leu Le" which seems to contemplate the flogging of women, with certain additional precautions, much in the same manner as men. But the practice has, I believe, fallen completely into disuse. If a woman is "economical of the truth," mouth-slapping is the usual corrective ; a sort of flapper, like the sole of a shoe, being the instrument employed. Instances are said to occur where the woman retires from court with her face swollen to the size of a pumpkin, and the statement is not difficult of belief. A score or two applications of the instrument described might easily produce such a result.

Then there is the Cangue, which is used more for punishment than for the purposes of torture, but which is still susceptible of the latter application. This is a large flat heavy piece of wood three or four feet in diameter, with a hole in the centre—or rather two pieces of wood, with semicircular openings, which join and are bolted together round the victim's neck. It must be an exceedingly uncomfortable appendage at the best ; but much depends on arrangement with the police or "Yamên Runners" as the court underlings are commonly called. It may be made to fit so tightly as to press, with the slightest movement, on the apple of the throat ; or it may be large and loose. The culprit may be

made to bear the full weight on his neck, or he may be allowed to support it.

There is appended, however, to the section defining punishments, a supplementary clause prescribing two instruments for the sole purpose of torture, in the investigation of grave cases. Thus—

“The instrument for compressing the ankle bones shall consist of a middle piece 3 *che* 4 *tsun*¹ long and two side pieces 3 *che*, each in length. The upper end of each piece shall be circular and 1·8 *tsun* in diameter. The lower ends shall be cut square 2 *tsun* in thickness. At a distance of 6 *tsun* from the lower end four hollows or sockets shall be excavated 1·6 *tsun* in diameter and 0·7 *tsun* in depth; one on each side of the middle piece and on each side of the other pieces, to correspond.

The method of use suggests itself: lodge the ankles in the sockets, and compress the ends. And an implement for squeezing the fingers is similar. It is to consist of five small round sticks 7 *tsun* in length, and 0·45 *tsun* in diameter; the method of application being, of course, identical.

The prescribed forms of bamboo, and the ankle and finger crushers, seem to be the only implements of torture allowed by law; and they are part of the furniture of every court of justice. It is even provided that they shall, before being given into the charge of magistrates, be examined and approved, first by the head of the district, secondly by the chief judge, and thirdly by the governor of the province. Nothing could be more exact or more careful. And

¹ The official *che*=about 14 inches. A *tsun* is the decimal part of a *che*.

it is enacted, elsewhere, that any magistrate using illegal or unexamined instruments of torture shall be accused thereof before the Supreme Court ; while an edict of Kanghi provides that any magistrate who inflicts a greater amount of torture than is allowed by the law shall be forthwith tried before his superiors for the offence.

So far the law. But no one—least of all the Chinese themselves—expects practice to correspond with precept, in China. It is perfectly understood, for instance, that “the virtuous proclamations which are issued with such unfailing regularity, in such superlative abundance, and with such felicity of diction, by all grades of officials,” are not intended to be enforced.¹ And so the theories and precautions with which the use of torture is surrounded by law are ignored or circumvented, occasionally, in practice. Suspension of the victim by the thumbs, with the arms bent behind the back and the toes only touching the ground, is a common practice. There is used also, in the case of great criminals, and especially in the Southern provinces, a mode of torture called “kneeling on chains.” The victim may be made to kneel on a coil of sharp chain, with his arms extended, and a lictor standing ready to flog him if he lower them ; or he may be suspended from the ceiling, face downwards, by a cord attached to his thumbs and great toes, and lowered till the

¹ *Vide* a clever and humorous book entitled “Chinese Characteristics,” by the Rev. Arthur Smith, published not long ago in Shanghai.

weight of the body rests on the knees on the chain. Quite recently, for instance, according to a Chinese newspaper, two men charged with belonging to a secret association in Hupeh were made to kneel on sharp chains, and received one thousand blows with the light bamboo, to elicit confession. There had been, apparently, some indications of a local disturbance, and these men were arrested as ring-leaders. Suspension, too, by one wrist and ankle: suspension by a pole passed under the armpit, with the hands tied under the knees, and various other cruelties, are said to be practised occasionally in Southern yaméns. Yet there are, in the penal code, stringent provisions against the infliction of illegal punishment; and the penalty, if death ensue, is severe. A mandarin came to serious grief, not long ago, for decapitating a man where the law called for strangulation; the point being that dismemberment of the body is a disgrace, and was in excess, therefore, of the legal sentence.

But it may easily be conceived that in the matter of torture, and in all ordinary cases, the following provision in section 413 is sufficiently elastic to shield a multitude of delinquencies :—

“ When it so happens that, immediately after the infliction of punishment on the upper part of the back of the thighs, and in a lawful manner, the culprit commits suicide or dies in any manner in consequence of the punishment he had undergone, no person shall be held responsible for the same.”

Unless a case had been so glaring as to excite the whole neighbourhood—and the Chinese are not

easily moved—means would be found to hush up or explain away improprieties. The power and venality of official underlings, the general prevalence of bribery, the difficulties attending appeals, and the absence of that publicity which renders illegality practically impossible in England, make it very difficult to secure the correction of injustice in China.

Still, cases do occasionally happen; and the following, which I summarize from an elaborate report in the *Peking Gazette*, may serve as an illustration. A draper at a small town in Central China found, in the morning, that his shop had been plundered. Going out to prospect, he found some bits of cloth on the river-bank, and, a little farther up, a junk at anchor. He then seems to have stretched a point, declared that he had found the cloth on the junk, and so procured the arrest of all on board. The magistrate forthwith employed torture—tortured the crew into admitting themselves accessories, and tortured to death the two men, father and son, who had chartered the boat. When the case came before the chief provincial authorities on report, they considered it so unsatisfactory that they sentenced the draper to be strangled for giving malicious false evidence resulting in the death of the accused, and the magistrate to be cashiered and banished for carelessness and illegal torture. It is nothing to the present purpose that the Board of Punishments—which acts as a sort of supreme court of revision—took a more lenient

view, and procured a reduction of these sentences to a comparatively nominal penalty. Legal quibbles can be urged, on occasion, in China as well as elsewhere.

Besides, we are concerned with the employment and methods of torture rather than with the course of legal procedure; and a few other illustrative cases will, perhaps, best explain what may and does happen, at times, in Chinese Criminal Courts. We all remember the picture drawn by the Abbé Huc, of a trial witnessed by him at a city in Hupeh:—

“The first object that presented itself in the judgment hall was the accused—the person on his trial. He was suspended in the middle of the hall Ropes attached to a great beam in the roof held him tied by the wrists and feet, so as to throw the body into the form of a bow. Beneath him stood five or six executioners armed with rattan rods and leather lashes, their clothes and faces spotted with blood—the blood of the unfortunate creature, who was uttering stifled groans while his flesh was torn almost in tatters. The audience present at this frightful spectacle appeared quite at their ease; and our yellow caps excited much more emotion than the spectacle of torture. Many laughed, indeed, at the expression of horror visible in our faces.”

The picture is highly wrought, and is inconsistent with the understood rule that the bamboo shall be applied only to the back of the thighs. But the mandarins permit themselves considerable latitude in cases of great criminals; and this man was, the magistrate explained, the chief of a band of pirates who had been pillaging junks on the Yangtze, and had committed more than fifty murders, “cutting out the tongues and tearing out the eyes of men,

women, and children " with circumstances of horrible barbarity. He had been induced to confess his own crimes, but persisted in not denouncing his companions ; and the magistrate was employing this method of overcoming his reluctance. The case is an extreme one, no doubt ; but ruffians of this stamp exist in China, and no mercy is shown them when caught. An English gentleman was told recently by a Chinaman, who himself saw it, of an instance in which the walls were spattered with the blood of the victim. Cases undoubtedly occur where a man is beaten to death ; that is to say, he dies in jail before sentence is passed. One sees occasionally, in the *Peking Gazette*, a report from a provincial official about some serious crime, in which the remark occurs that the prisoner confessed, and was sentenced accordingly to prompt execution ; or that such another " has died in jail, so no further action need be taken." No mention is made of torture ; but the words are believed not infrequently to cover proceedings not widely different from those which Huc describes.

In the north and centre of China the bamboo is without doubt the implement usually employed, and we have seen that it can be effectively applied. But there is not the same adherence to prescribed methods in the south. Whether it be in pursuance of traditional practice ; whether it is considered that the people, being more lawless, require harsher methods ; or whatever be the cause, judicial procedure is certainly harsher in the southern than in the

northern provinces. Executions are more frequent, and more cruel methods of torture are used. The waterways around Canton, for instance, swarm with pirates who are capable of any iniquity, and when they are caught they generally get short shrift. Imprisonment—imprisonment, at least, after our notions—would be a sheer farce with such ruffians. A Chinese gentleman who had lately travelled in Europe, and who published an entertaining volume of *Notes on Western Customs* on his return, was especially struck by this incongruity.

“The jails are” (he writes) “exceedingly spacious and clean, such as the Middle Kingdom has never had either in ancient or modern times. With each prisoner the only fear is lest he should be uncomfortable or should fall ill; and so, in all matter of clothing, food, and surroundings he is far better off than he was at home. If they had to deal with the rascaldom of the Middle Kingdom these would infallibly get into trouble in order to get into prison! And how could accommodation be found for them all?”

This, however, is from the point of view of punishment; but prisons serve, in China, rather for purposes of detention pending trial than as punitive establishments; and they constitute, in this sense, a veritable means of torture in themselves. A Chinese magistrate can keep a man in prison for a long time before trial, as was the case in England before the Habeas Corpus Act. And not only is detention in the filthy dens that serve as jails in China a severe experience in itself, but the jailers have great power over a prisoner, and can make it especially uncomfortable for one known to be rich,

unless propitiated by *douceurs* according to his means. They rarely dare to use physical violence, but they certainly have the means of starving him, and of keeping him in most filthy places, unless friends come forward and give or pay for food and otherwise propitiate them. It is said, indeed, that some Yamên Runners will, in their own houses, hang a man up with his arms twisted behind, in order to elicit a confession before taking him to the magistrate ; but the illegality of such a proceeding has been loudly denounced, and there would be some exceptional motive, probably, at work. These underlings, in fact, live by extortion and are capable of any malpractice. The officials themselves are perpetually denouncing them, while using and profiting by them.¹

As an instance of the way in which torture can be abused I may quote a case that excited much reprobation at the time in North China, and which illustrates also a curious social prejudice. There are many curious things in the Ta-tsing Leu Le. Section 102, for instance—which provides that “ whoever, falsely representing any of his wives as his sister, gives her away in marriage, shall receive

¹ The *Peking Gazette* of the 9th November last contains an Imperial decree referring to this very feature. “ Representation has been made to the Emperor that the police frequently accept bribes from robbers instead of arresting them, and the local authorities avoid holding inquiries into cases of stealing that are reported to them, &c.” As usual, the high provincial authorities are desired to look to it.

one hundred blows"; and that "those who knowingly receive in marriage such wives . . . shall participate equally in the punishment"—shows that the species of deceit which Pharaoh and Abimelech reprehended in Abraham and Isaac must have been of at least occasional occurrence over a remarkably wide area. We are concerned, however, at present, with Section 375, which provides that—

"All strolling players who are guilty of purchasing the sons or daughters of free persons in order to educate them as actors or actresses, or who are guilty of marrying or adopting as children such free persons, shall, in each case, be punished with one hundred blows.

"All persons who knowingly sell free persons to such strolling players, and all females born of free parents who voluntarily intermarry with them shall be similarly punishable.

"The person who negotiates the transaction shall in each case suffer the punishment next in degree; the money paid shall be forfeited to Government, and the females sent back to their parents or families."

This clause is inspired by the well-known custom which excludes play-actors, barbers, and executioners from the privilege of entry at the public Examinations through which, as we have seen, every Chinese must pass if he would enter official life or obtain the *cachet* of an educated gentleman. Well! Yang Yeh-liu broke this law. He was a play-actor, high in professional reputation, and scarcely less remarkable for a handsome person; and scandal said his *bonnes fortunes* had been numerous. But misfortune came to him, at last, in the shape of a Cantonese maiden. A certain Canton

merchant, having business relations both at Shanghai and Canton, rejoiced in a domestic establishment at each port. The wife at Shanghai had a foster-daughter, and this girl is the heroine of the tale. She saw Yang, fell hopelessly in love, and persuaded her mother to let her marry him. The merchant certainly gave no formal consent, and was away in the South at the time. But it was currently understood that the absence was calculated. He could not approve, but would not oppose, and so kept aloof and let things take their course. At any rate, the marriage happened. Negotiations were opened—marriages are always arranged, in China, by a professional go-between—all formalities were gone through, and mother and daughter removed to Yang's house.

To English people, interference with such a purely domestic arrangement might well seem impossible. But Chinese ways are peculiar. Cantonese society felt outraged; certain members of it brought the case to the notice of the Shanghai magistrate, who chanced to be also a Cantonese; and the latter, having the Ta-tsing Leu Le to go upon, lent his willing help to vindicate the proprieties. It seems to have been felt, however, that something more than a mere marriage must be proved, to justify the desired vengeance; and so a plea of abduction was sought to be established. As Yang denied this, here was an opportunity for torture. He was strung up by the thumbs, with his arms bent behind him, till his shoulders were so wrenched that

he was incapacitated from following his profession ; and was only relieved on payment of Tls. 600 (about 100*l.*) from the torture of the cangue pressing on the apple of the throat. It was further alleged that he received one hundred blows on the ankle-bone with the heavy bamboo, and that he was persuaded by these various means to confess, and condemned to perpetual banishment. The girl, who had received one hundred blows on the mouth, was placed in a refuge, to be at the disposal of the first man who cared to ask for her in marriage ; while her mother committed suicide.¹ This was not all, however. Abduction is a serious matter, and the sentence has to be endorsed by the prefect and by the provincial judge. But here, obviously, is an opportunity for recantation, and for renewed torture ; and that was Yang's experience. He recanted before the prefect, was bamboosed into renewed confession and sent on to the judge ; renewed his recantation, and was sent back to the prefect, &c., &c. The case could, of course, have but one ending ; and it affords a vivid illustration of the value of torture-wrung confession.

But if no hindrance was offered to the completion of the iniquity, public opinion among the northern Chinese was gravely outraged. The whole affair excited general indignation, which was so freely

¹ The facts in this and the following cases are narrated in the files of the *North-China Herald* for the years 1874-75, 1883-84, and 1889 respectively.

voiced in the *Shên-pao*, a local Chinese newspaper, that the Cantonese threatened to demolish its office in revenge. A conviction that any such attempt might meet with opposition from foreigners probably checked their ardour; for the paper belonged to an Englishman, Mr. Major, whose office was in the foreign settlement. An attempt was made, instead, to hale the Chinese sub-editors before the court; but our treaty happily forbids interference with natives in foreign employ, and the British Consul was able to interpose his ægis. The magistrate was furious, but was told to prosecute Mr. Major before the English court if he conceived himself to have cause of complaint! Comprehending, however, that he would scarcely gain a sympathetic hearing, he wisely refrained from the experiment, and the excitement gradually died out.

This was undoubtedly a case in which the law was prostituted to subserve the anger and vengeance of a certain powerful section of the community. Still, law and custom did afford a technical opening, and the right of torture enabled the iniquity to be carried through. That was, however, not the first time the same magistrate had similarly distinguished himself. He had, for instance, a few months previously, been guilty of the following amenities toward the keeper of an opium-shop from whom he wished to extract a certain confession. The man was suspended by a cord fastened to both hands behind the back, given three hundred blows with the heavy bamboo with such severity as to cause

laceration, and—his admissions still not coinciding with the suspicions of the magistrate—one hundred blows more on the ankle-bone, as a climax. When taken down, fainting, after this hideous torture, both shoulder-joints were found to be dislocated.

It is well to note that the official hero of both these cases was a Cantonese, who had probably been familiarized with such barbarities in his native province. And I may perhaps instance another case, which occurred some years ago at Swatow, in the very province of Kwangtung, as illustrating both the excesses torture may cover and the evidence which law and custom admit as proof of confession. We accept a cross as "his mark," but the Chinese prefer the imprint of the forefinger. They say that the lines on the skin at the end of the thumb and fingers differ, like faces, in different individuals. Time seems to have been when the validity of such a signature was recognized in England; and the practicability of identification by such means has again, lately, been subject of discussion—another proof, clearly, of the Chinese contention that knowledge came originally from the East! They, at any rate, accept the imprint of a finger smeared in Indian ink, when no better signature is forthcoming. This suffices not only for confessions, but, in the case of illiterate people, as a seal for civil agreements. Well, in the case before us, a man who had formerly lived in Hong Kong and who had amassed some wealth, was charged with having been concerned in kidnapping, a quarter of

a century previously. The object was alleged to be extortion. At any rate he was tortured till he made this form of confession. He flung his hand, which had been carefully inked, on to a written and prepared confession, while in the agony of torture—and that was enough: he was decapitated. But the officials were not even yet content. The dead man had a brother living in Hong Kong, and the idea was conceived of exploiting him also. A threat was held out of demanding his extradition unless he would pay 4000 dollars, and one Le Lum-kwai was sent to enforce the alternative. But an altercation which ensued attracted the attention of the police; and Le was haled before the magistrate and, eventually, before the Supreme Court of the Colony. English law is not tender to such proceedings. He was found guilty of feloniously accusing of murder, and of attempting to extort money by threats; and the judge imposed the full penalty under every count in order that, if a technical flaw were by chance found in one, there might remain other sentences to hold him!

These cases are quoted, as we have seen, from the proceedings of southern magistrates or of southern Courts. But northern magistrates are not immaculate. A case occurred not long ago, at Shanghai, where a Chinese detective in the service of the Foreign Municipal Council fell into the clutches of the native court on a charge of which he was believed to be wholly innocent, but which was made the excuse for much cruelty, in which a certain

jealousy of the Foreign Council probably found expression. A man in whose arrest he had been concerned died; and the Chinese principle of a life for a life was used as an excuse for maltreatment and extortion. The death really occurred from cholera; but it was alleged to have resulted from violence; and false witnesses were readily forthcoming. The detective had made himself obnoxious to the Chinese criminal classes and to the Yamên underlings, and the opportunity was excellent both for extortion and revenge. The case affords an illustration, in fact, of possible maltreatment, even before trial, in a Chinese prison. The man was taken into the city; a heavy chain was fastened round his neck; chains were fastened tightly round his hands and feet, and he was kept chained to the wall in a cell, with scarcely room to turn round. He was beaten across the shoulders with a bamboo; he got no food except what was given him by his fellow-prisoners. The Runners offered to feed him well, and make him comfortable, if he would give them fifty dollars; but as he neither could nor would, for two days he got nothing at all. And yet the Taotai assured the foreign authorities he was not being ill-treated! As we are not concerned to follow up a Chinese lawsuit, it will suffice to add that the man was eventually condemned to death; but that representations were made to the Foreign Ministers at Peking, and by them to the Imperial Government; and that he was, through these means, eventually set free.

We have been considering torture, so far, chiefly as a method of eliciting confession. But it may not be superfluous to remark that some methods of taking life amount to torture. The legal modes of punishment in China are simplicity itself. Flogging: a fixed number of blows being strictly allotted to a given offence. Banishment: to remote districts, with or without certain additional penalties. Death: by strangling, or decapitation—or, in certain extreme cases, by the so-called *ling-che* or lingering process. But this last certainly amounts, in theory, to torture of a horrible kind. It is applicable only to criminals of the deepest dye; such as rebels, parricides, women who kill their husbands, murderers who kill three persons of one family. It is called variously the lingering process, the slow and painful process, slicing to death, &c.; and the prescribed method seems to correspond with the last-named term. The skin of the forehead is supposed to be sliced down, the cheeks slashed, the nose slit, the breasts sliced off, the stomach gashed, &c., &c., before the *coup de grâce* is given. But when we come to ask how far the legal sentence is put in actual execution, we find some conflict of testimony. Mr. Giles¹ affirms that “a slight gash only is made across each collar-bone, and three gashes across the breast in the shape of the character meaning 1000 (indicating the number of

¹ “Chinese Sketches.” By Herbert A. Giles, of H.B.M.’s China Consular Service. London, 1876.

strokes the criminal ought to have received), and that decapitation follows without delay." But in the only case where I have heard of a foreign witness, the process seems to have approximated much more nearly to the legal prescription than to this assumption. It was that of a man who had been rendited from Hong Kong; and the statements of certain Englishmen who saw the execution, in Canton, were the eventual cause of our requiring from the Viceroy the pledge referred to on the opening page. The probability is that, in this as in many other cases, the southern practice is the more cruel, and that Mr. Giles' impression is derived from the north.

Still *ling-che*, in whatever form, is a legal punishment. But methods of execution seem to be occasionally employed, at least in the south, which find no sanction in the code. Cases have come under the notice of foreigners of death by crucifixion, and of the victim being suspended by the neck in a cage in such a way that he can only touch the ground with the tips of his toes, and being left to die of starvation. Such proceedings are, however, distinctly illegal—survivals, probably, of an age when Chinese rule and Chinese civilization, which have radiated from the north, were less firmly established. So that, whatever the law, the usual practice in a given region would seem to be materially influenced by local popular opinion : one who would generalize from experience in Kiangsu would excite a smile in Kwangtung ; just as the impressions of one who

had lived in Shanse would seem foreign to a resident in Fohkien.

Even legal sentences, however, are sometimes published of such barbarity and so inconsistent with the general conception of Chinese civilization, that one would fain regard them also as untimely survivals of a different past, rather than as true expressions of modern national feeling. The following excerpt, for example, from the *Peking Gazette* of the 28th November, 1877, records a decree so horrible that we must rate lowly the moral standard where such a law can be allowed to remain in even nominal force. Custom may possibly, as in the case of the "lingering death," have introduced some modifications in practice; but the facts of the prolonged captivity of an innocent child, with a view to future punishment, and the formal approval by the Emperor of the legal sentence, would still remain to testify to the barbarity of the Code :—

"Yü Luh, Governor of Anhwei, memorializes as follows : In 1872, certain disturbances had broken out on the border of that province and of Honan. After the apprehension of the leader Li Liu . . . the Government forces further effected the capture of this malefactor's son, Li Mao-tze, at that time six years old. The child was handed over by the Governor of Honan to the district magistrate, to be kept imprisoned till he should reach the proper age to be dealt with according to law. And the magistrate of the said district has now reported that the prisoner has reached the age of eleven, and acknowledges that he is the son of the insurgent leader Li Liu, but owing to his tender years at the time he knew nothing of his father's treasonable designs. The law runs as follows :—'The children and grandchildren of rebels, if not themselves privy to the treasonable designs of their parents, shall be delivered into the hands of the Imperial household to be emascu-

lated, and shall be forwarded to Turkestan and given over as slaves to the soldiery. If beneath the age of ten, they shall be confined in prison until they shall have reached the age of eleven, whereupon the sentence of the law shall be carried into effect.' As the prisoner in question has now reached the prescribed age, execution of the sentence of the law must be proceeded with, and submission to this effect having been made by the provincial judge, on application by the prefect, the Governor has approved the same and has communicated with the Board of Punishments in due form. He requests that instructions may be issued accordingly."

The Imperial rescript: "Let the Board of Punishments take note," confirms the proposal, which throws a lurid light on the idea of visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children that finds frequent expression in Oriental polity. The idea is, of course, to extirpate, root and branch, a noxious brood: for parricide and rebellion are, as we have seen, classed together as the most horrible of crimes. But what is perhaps most curious is the illustration afforded of the slow evolution of moral perceptions in the human mind: for this sentence is evidently, from the language used, considered a merciful reduction of the death penalty to which the victim would have been liable had he been "privy to his father's treasonable designs." The whole incident affords, also, a curious illustration of the methodical formality of Chinese procedure.¹ Jehu's extermina-

¹ Customs in China die hard, but it is fair to note that this practice, like that of *ling-che*, seems to be in a fair way of modification to suit the newer day. The Chinese Ministers showed some discomfort when reproached about this case by certain of the Foreign Representatives at Peking, and a case is noted in the *North-China Herald*, last year, where the punishment was evaded.

tion of the house of Omri was simple butchery, compared to the orderly and legal extinction of the family of Li Liu.

We are concerned, however, with the theory and practice of judicial torture rather than with the maxims and out-of-the-way sentences of Chinese law; and the cases that have been quoted will suffice to illustrate both the form torture commonly takes and the abuses to which it is liable. It would be as great a mistake to suppose that such scenes of cruelty as those described are being daily enacted throughout the length and breadth of China, as it would be to take the Chinese *literati* at their own valuation, as possessing laws of paternal leniency. The truth lies, no doubt, between these two extremes. For just as (to quote Mr. Giles' appropriate simile) "people going up a mountain complain to those coming down, of the bitter cold, and are assured by the latter that the temperature is really pleasant"; so certain Chinese customs savour to us of a cruelty long since disused in Europe, "while the Chinese enthusiast proudly compares the practice of the present dynasty with the atrocities of less civilized ages." And there are not wanting indications that opinion is tending generally—however slowly—to discountenance and discourage the more cruel proceedings. The so-called "lingering death," for instance, which used to mean chopping off one limb after another and tearing out the heart, before eventual decapitation, has been reduced at least to the infliction of a series of gashes representing these mutilations, followed

by a speedier death-blow. Besides the criminal is said, both in this case and in that of ordinary decapitation, to be usually half stupefied with opium before undergoing the penalty. There may be, to our notions, a revolting absence of decency in the arrangements; but that is a matter of education and sentiment. The culprit is carried on to an open space accessible to what spectators soever choose to assemble: he is merely set kneeling on the ground—several may possibly be set kneeling in a row—with the head bent forward and the hands tied behind the back; and the executioner steps from one to another dealing the fatal blow. But the prior stupefaction of, at least, the ordinary criminal marks an attitude as far removed from the original conception of *ling-che* as our own private executions are removed from the practice of hanging, drawing and quartering a traitor, or of hanging a robber by the wayside and leaving the skeleton there in chains. Then, again, the Emperor Kanghi forbade bambooning across the back and shoulders, for the reason that “near the surface lie the liver and the lungs,” and serious internal injury might be inflicted for some trivial offence. Ankle-beating, finger-squeezing, and such other amenities are employed only, as a rule, in flagrant cases; and such punishments as pressing the knees to the ground and making prisoners kneel on chains are theoretically disapproved, although, as we have seen, by no means finally abandoned.

It would be wrong, therefore, to deduce from the

incidents narrated, conclusions too adverse to the Chinese character and civilization. They are—the northern Chinese, at any rate—peaceable and good-natured in every-day life, though capable of cruelty and turbulence when excited. They object, as I remarked in a former chapter, to kill the chrysalis of the silk-worm, on the plea of gratitude for its services; yet they will saturate a rat with kerosine oil and set fire to it. And so with the Mandarins. Some rare officials gain a reputation for even-handed justice and immaculate honesty, while others abuse and misuse their power. Huc's magistrate affirmed that it was repugnant to his naturally mild disposition to have to thrash his pirate so unmercifully, but that the higher duty of rooting out such a gang of ruffians constrained him. And this—discounting the inevitable platitude—represents, probably, the mental attitude of the majority of officials. The Law allows torture, and the Court awards it—in degrees varying according to circumstances and locality.

In the absence, indeed, of the sanction of an oath, or of any equivalent based upon ultimate punishment by an unseen power, and in presence of the fact that the Chinese, like other Orientals, are a nation of liars without even the sense of shame in being found out, it would seem hardly possible to banish the use of the light bamboo as a "truth compeller." But torture of the accused, or of the condemned, only becomes hideous in the cases of rebellion, parricide, piracy with murder, and

other such grave crimes—to which may perhaps also be added membership of secret societies, which are more hateful to the governing classes of China than is Freemasonry to the Pope. When the Government loses its head, at times of rebellion or local disturbance, trial and sentence tend to degenerate into savagery; and, in the south of China, every form of devilish ingenuity has been expended in torturing those who are foolish enough to deny their guilt. But in cases of ordinary crime, at a period of normal quiet, I am inclined to doubt the habitual employment of torture other than the bamboo, or the severity of its use when applied.

The Chinese are, however, a people about whom it is exceedingly dangerous to generalize on any possible subject. Wingrove Cooke, than whom few foreigners have studied more intelligently the Chinese problem, admitted having “written several very fine characters for the whole Chinese race”; but somehow the people themselves “were always saying or doing something which rubbed so rudely against his hypothesis” that he burnt each successive production, and settled down to a conviction that it was impossible for a western mind to form a conception of Chinese character. And the author of *Chinese Characteristics* seems to have arrived at a nearly similar conclusion, after all his observation and experience. “One’s first impression,” for example—to select at random one of his illustrations—“might be that there is no benevolence in

China. This error is afterwards corrected, and it is perceived that, such as it is, there is a great deal of benevolence. But on closer examination it turns out to be (what the tradesmen call Irish poplin) 'half-stuff.' Still, occasional cases render us disinclined to deny its existence; and thus our minds are left in what Macaulay termed 'an uneasy and interminable state of abeyance.' We know that there is truth, but we cannot decide exactly where it lies." The aphorism is of very wide application. The much-vaunted paternal government of the Mandarins is "half-stuff." The moral platitudes of which they are so fond are "half-stuff"; and even the practice of torture is not pure barbarism. For the *literati* it is sufficient that it is customary, and that it is defensible by the arguments indicated. The enormous army of official underlings who batten on the people find their account in the extortion which it facilitates. And a certain callousness and apathy of disposition make the Chinese people less sensitive than ourselves to the cruelty, and more tolerant of the misgovernment which it helps to sustain.

Nor have the Chinese been, in this respect, sinners above all other men, though they have remained longer impervious to a perception of their sin. It is not, as we have seen, so very long since the use of torture was abolished in Europe. Up to the time of foreign intercourse it had, on the same grounds, been permitted also in Japan. But the Japanese—brighter than their neighbours in this as in other

respects—came promptly to recognize their error. The practice was abolished there, eighteen years ago, by an edict as remarkable for pith as for simplicity. “Verdicts in criminal cases shall be given on the evidence adduced.” So ran the Imperial utterance. And it was understood that the use of torture to extract confession was to be discontinued, thenceforward, in Japanese courts.

The unexpected has, we know, a remarkable way of happening ; and China may, some day, begin the reform of her jurisprudence which must precede the recovery of judicial control over foreigners, which Japan was quick to set up as a high political aim. Certain expressions in the Convention negotiated by Sir Thomas Wade, in 1876, appeared to imply such a possibility ; and the valedictory article¹ published by the Marquis Tseng left us to infer that the national pride is galled by the withdrawal of foreigners from the jurisdiction of the native courts ; but no indication of a willingness to adopt the means necessary for the removal of the stigma is yet apparent.

“China : the Sleep and the Awakening.” By the Marquis Tseng. *Asiatic Quarterly Review*, January, 1887.

THE YELLOW RIVER.

CHAPTER XV.

CHINA'S SORROW.

By its tremendous floods, its unruly course, its constant outbreaks, and the fearful devastation they cause, the Hwang-ho, or Yellow River, has earned the name of "China's Sorrow," and well does it deserve the title. Rarely does a year pass without some disaster. It is almost certain to break, at some point in its long course, through the great embankments erected to restrain it, and to inundate a greater or less tract of the populous and fertile country through which it flows. But these annual inundations are as nothing compared to its more serious outbreaks. Nine times within the historic era it has changed its whole course across North China to the sea, submerging immense districts, drowning whole populations, and reducing untold numbers to the extremity of distress. It did this last in 1851, when it selected its present northerly course; but on two subsequent occasions—in 1868 and in 1887—it has again broken bounds, and been prevented only at immense cost from resuming an easterly trend.

A glance at the map will show that China is divided roughly across the centre by a lofty range called the Tsing-ling, which projects from the Kwenlun mountains into the province of Anhwei. To the north and east of this range there lies an immense plain, the monotony of which is broken by the mountainous promontory of Shantung, and by outlying hills that were perhaps islands in a primeval sea. This plain, which extends over nearly ten degrees of latitude, has been formed mainly by the deposit of two great rivers, the Yangtze and the Hwang-ho, which rise not far from each other in the mountains of Thibet and—after a divergent course of more than 2000 miles, during which they are separated by the Tsing-ling range—converge again into a conterminous delta as they approach the Yellow Sea. It is through this great plain that the Yellow River pursues a devious course of 500 miles after issuing from the highland; and it is across this plain—pivoting, as it were, upon a certain district in the province of Honan—that it has swung its whole flood, several times in history, between the Gulf of Pecheli and the Yellow Sea.

It is not surprising that such a region and such a river should occupy a prominent place in Chinese annals. So early as 2200-300 B.C., a tremendous deluge is recorded in the "Shuking" to have reduced the inhabitants to the depths of misery; and the fame of Yü, who is glorified in Chinese legend, rests largely on his success in bridling the

waters. From beyond the western borders of the present China proper he is represented as "tracking the great rivers, burning the woods, boring the rocks, and cutting through the mountains that obstructed their progress, and then deepening their channels till the waters flowed peacefully into the Eastern Sea." We are told how he laboured for thirteen years, sparing neither trouble nor fatigue, and not even once entering his own house, though he passed three times before the door; how he had boats for travelling by water, and chariots for land, and sledges for mud, with relays of men to draw them always in attendance, to expedite his movements. And he achieved a complete success, for he dug out nine channels to conduct the waters to the sea, and afterwards the plain could be cultivated and nourish its inhabitants.¹

It was not likely that a professed record of engineering achievements on such a scale, at such an epoch, would escape criticism. From attempts to identify it with the Noachian deluge,² down to assumed identifications of Yü's work,³ the "Flood of Yao" has been the subject of abounding comment. It will be sufficient for our purpose if we agree with Dr. Legge in rejecting as incredible the idea of one

¹ "The Sacred Books of China." Translated by James Legge. Part I. Oxford. 1878. Details of Yü's labours are given in Part III. of the "Shuking," entitled "The Tribute of Yü;" and those who care to pursue the subject will find it discussed in
² "The Middle Kingdom." By S. Wells Williams. London. 1883. ³ "Mémoires concernant les Chinois." Paris. 1776, &c.

man having performed the mighty deeds with which Yü is credited, while admitting that his flood was in all probability an authentic inundation, and that he did distinguish himself in regulating its course to the sea. We may perhaps even go farther, and admit, with Pumpelly,⁴ that, whether the works of Yü belong to the period of history or allegory, "there seems little doubt the Chinese had, more than 2000 years before the Christian era, brought the turbulent river under their control by an immense system of dykes, and had begun to cultivate the extensive marshes of the delta plain."

However that may be—in whatever light we may regard them—the so-called "labours of Yü" would appear to have been efficacious; for it is not till 1500 years later, in 602 B.C., that we hear of the Hwang-ho leaving its allotted channel. Chinese history records, as we have seen, eight changes of course since that epoch; but we may pass over, as of little general interest, dates that merely annotate the caprices of the unruly stream, and fix our attention upon its later outbreaks. The last great change was in A.D. 1851. For 500 years before that date the river had run eastward from Honan, across the province of Kiang-su, finding an outlet into the Yellow Sea in 34° N. Bursting its left bank in the autumn of 1851, it

⁴ "Geological Researches in China." By Raphael Pumpelly. Smithsonian Contributions. Washington. 1866, &c., &c.

rushed across the province of Shantung, making its way eventually into the Gulf of Pecheli, through the mouth of the Tatsing, at a point four degrees north of its former mouth. A terrible inundation occurred in 1868 through a fresh outbreak to the south. And again, during the autumn of 1887, it burst out with still more disastrous force; gorging all water-courses, filling all depressions, drowning cities and villages, and trending back again towards the Yellow Sea. For the river does not, be it understood, revert on such occasions to its former channels. When it elects, for reasons which we shall presently examine, to leave its existing bed, it simply bursts out over the plain and flows blindly on, in an ever-widening flood, till it finds a depression—generally the bed of some other river—through which it can make its way to the ocean. These catastrophes are so terrible and so remarkable that it is worth while trying to realize the conditions of the problem.

The Hwang-ho rises, as we have seen, in the mountains of Thibet, in about lat. 35° N. and long. 96° E., in a marshy highland, not more than 100 miles from the source of its great rival. Following thence the northern slope of the Kwenlun, while the Yangtze trends to the south, it runs a devious course of 700 miles to Lanchow, in the province of Kansuh. It then turns north until it comes in contact with the Mongolian plateau, bends round the country of the Ortous, returns due south between the provinces of Shense and Shanse to a

point in 34.40° N., where it is joined by the Wei ; and then, issuing, through the Tung-kwan gorge, makes a sharp easterly bend across the plain. There is one peculiarity which it will be well to note, before quitting the highland and accompanying it on its journey—that is, the yellow loëss from which it derives its name. Hwang in Chinese means yellow ; hwang-tu is the name of the yellow earth ; and hwang-ho means yellow river. “ Here in this Wei basin,” writes von Richtofen¹ of its chief tributary, “ everything is yellow. The hills, the fields, the waters of rivers and brooks are yellow ; the houses are made of yellow earth, the vegetation is covered with yellow dust, and whatever moves on the roads shares, for the same reason, the general yellow colour.” And what is true of the Wei basin is true apparently of the whole surrounding region. This friable yellow loam is spread

¹ *Letters to the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce.* By Baron F. von Richtofen. Shanghai. 1870-2. The loëss formation is so peculiar that it may be worth while quoting a few lines in which the Baron sums up its prominent characteristics :—“ Loëss is,” he says, “ a solid but friable earth of a brownish-yellow colour, and, when triturated with water, not unlike loam, but differing from it by its highly porous and tubular structure. These tubes are often filled with a film of lime, and ramify like the roots of plants. Among the constituents very fine sand and carbonate of lime predominate, next to the argillaceous basis. The loëss spreads alike over both high and low ground, smoothing the irregularities of the surface ; its thickness exceeds often 1000ft. ; it is not stratified and has a tendency to vertical cleavage ; it is full of fossil land-shells, and contains bones of land quadrupeds, but no remains of marine or fresh-water shells.” It is, in fact, a sub-aërial, and not a sub-aqueous deposit.

alike over high and low ground, to a thickness often of 1000 feet, through a great portion of the area which the Hwang-ho drains. This constitutes the silt with which it is charged when it enters its delta ; it is this which gives its fertile character to the plain through which it flows ; but it is the profusion also of this deposit which raises its bed above the level of the surrounding country, and causes the changes of course that are so prolific of disaster.

But silt, though a primary and all-important cause, is, after all, only one element in the case. It operates in conjunction with the tremendous freshets that pour down, every summer, from the highland to the plain : for though the Hwang-ho is, in winter, a comparatively moderate stream, varying in width from 500 to 1000 or 1500 yards where its channel is ill-defined, it assumes, in summer and autumn, immensely greater proportions. Its watershed being bare of trees, the melting snows and summer rains drain rapidly into the valley, and its stream becomes a raging torrent. If an ordinary river overflow its banks, it retires again within their limits when the days of freshet are past ; but the Hwang-ho is guided by no such considerations. It is confined, after entering its delta, by no valley ; and finds no obstacle, therefore, if it burst through the great dykes which the Chinese have erected to restrain it. The plains through which it runs are "almost perfectly level and stretch away in either direction, from the river margin, hundreds of miles" without appreciable rise or

depression.¹ So that a change in the course of the Yellow River means no change from one well-defined bed to another ; it means the sudden out-pouring of a resistless torrent over a comparatively dead level, and the conversion of hundreds of square miles of fertile plain into an inland sea.

It is time, now, to examine the measures which the Chinese have taken to deal with these conditions. Beginning shortly after its entry into the delta, they have erected on either side, at a considerable distance from the river bed, huge embankments designed to contain the flood which pours down during the freshets. The erection and repair of these embankments has been, from time immemorial, matter of the gravest Imperial solicitude. There is a Director-General of the Yellow River, who has under him a large staff of officials to superintend these works, to which vast sums are devoted and on the maintenance of which the welfare, nay, the very existence, of the neighbouring population depends. The *Peking Gazette* contains constant memorials from this official and from the governors of provinces through which the river runs, reporting its condition, its doings, or the results of reflection and consultation as to its future guidance.

The practice, it is to be feared, like much else in Chinese polity, fails often to correspond with the theory. Peculation and neglect are vices of the native character ; and not even the vast importance

¹ *China : Travels and Investigations, &c.* By James Harrison Wilson. New York. 1888.

of the Yellow River works avails to save them from the consequences of these failings. The strength of an embankment, like the strength of a chain, is no greater than that of its weakest part ; and the neglect or fraud of one careless or speculating official is sufficient to cause a weak point that will yield in the hour of trial. Nor, if General Wilson be credited, are the officials alone to blame. Not only are sections that have been well made neglected, and others scamped ; not only are no precautions taken to plant willows, reeds, or other growths that might help to consolidate the structure, but what vegetation does spontaneously crop up is raked off by the country-people for fuel ; the summits of the levees are used for roads and are sometimes cut down, by the traffic crossing them, nearly to the level of the plain : "they are at all times the favourite resort of burrowing animals ; and during the dry season the river, wandering from one side to the other of the space included between them, frequently impinges against and undermines them." Nothing is done to repair these damages till the floods come and the weak spots are broken through, when tremendous exertions are made, and thousands of people employed, to stop a gap that ought never to have happened.

The indictment is a formidable one, and is possibly exaggerated, but it derives a measure of support from admissions in the highest official quarters. Replying to a complaint from the Governor of

Honan, that "inveterate abuses of long standing exist in connection with the river works, and that the officers in charge of them have fallen into a settled groove and are not capable of adapting themselves to the requirements of the time," the Emperor¹ admits that

"The habits of the officials connected with the river, in scamping work and making fraudulent charges are indeed of a far-reaching nature. To this class of persons is entirely due all the waste of money and mismanagement that goes on. Let the Governor unmask their doings, and sternly denounce to us, without fear or favour, for severe punishment, any cases of abuse, that may come to his knowledge."

General Wilson seems to think that greater care and skill in the construction and maintenance of the embankments would avert not only the minor disasters that are of yearly occurrence, but even such violent outbreaks as have produced recent disasters. But then he questions the silting of the channel to the extent affirmed, and that assumption is contrary to the testimony of other observers. The Abbé Huc,² writing in 1844, declared that the river bed was then raised above the level of the plain along its whole course through Honan and Kiangsu, and predicted, as an inevitable consequence, the disaster that actually happened a few years later. And we have the testimony of Mr. Ney Elias,³ who visited

¹ *Peking Gazette*, November 20, 1887.

² "Souvenirs d'un Voyage dans la Tartarie." Vol. i. cap. vi.

³ "The New Bed of the Yellow River": Journal of the North China Branch of the Asiatic Society. Shanghai. 1869.

the spot after the prophecy had been fulfilled, to the complete accuracy of the statement on which it was based. Mr. Elias' description enables us, indeed, to realize so clearly the conditions of that (1851) outbreak, that we are tempted to reproduce it in his own language :—

“The breach [he writes] in the embankment of the old river is about a mile in width, and the present channel runs, as it were, diagonally through it. The two banks at this point are about three miles apart. Near the northern one there is a depression about a quarter of a mile broad and full of small sand-hills. . . . This was the main or low water channel of the river, the artificial outer embankments marking only the limit attained during the annual floods. The course of this low water channel . . . was not always parallel to the flood banks, but made a tortuous line between them; and the point where the breach now is was one where the current impinged on the north bank. [Mr. Elias found the bed] between the low water channel and either bank considerably elevated above the level of the surrounding country—a fact which was particularly noticeable at the breach, where the bank was seen in section, the outer slope being some forty feet in vertical height and the inner about twenty or twenty-five feet, showing an elevation of the bed of fifteen or twenty feet.¹ . . . Thus, by a mere cursory inspection of the neighbourhood of the breach, the cause of the Yellow River's change of course is at once apparent. The river had so diminished the capacity of its bed (which, by the way, was always an artificial one) by depositing the alluvium with which its waters were charged, that the main pressure during the flood season had come to bear on the upper or weaker part of the embankments; and, no measures

¹ Further exploration showed that even this was an under-estimate of the deposit. On a later journey, when he rode for a great distance along the deserted bed, Mr. Elias found the disproportion between the outer and inner slopes even greater—“say, forty feet to fifteen feet, and even more in some places.”

having been taken to strengthen these or deepen the channel, the great catastrophe happened, which, with its consequences, had been predicted by the Abbé Huc some years before."

It is a curious proof how little we then knew of the great empire with which our first treaty had just been negotiated, that five years elapsed before foreigners residing at Shanghai even heard that the river had disappeared! Nor was it till two years later, still, that they became aware of the direction it had chosen. Absolutely nothing was, therefore, known of the details of the occurrence, nor was it till Mr. Elias had explored the new course that an impression could be formed of the extent of the disaster.

It appears from his description that, for nearly a hundred miles after escaping through the breach, the water had flowed blindly on, drowning everything as it went, till it reached the channel of the Tatsing, which it appropriated and followed to the sea; and, even fifteen years after the event, the inundated region had hardly recovered. For a certain distance from the breach, the waters were certainly flowing in a definite channel; but "the banks and indeed the country on each side were composed of the river's own deposit, which seemed rather to have silted to a certain elevation than that the water had cut out for itself a bed in the soil;" while farther on even the margin of silt disappeared, and "the river widened out into a lagoon-like section, having the appearance of a belt of country ten to twelve miles broad in a state of flood—trees,

ruined villages, and patches of bare mud being all that was left of a once populous and fertile district."

Millions have been since spent in the endeavour to construct a new channel; but the end was so far from being accomplished, even in 1887, that one familiar with the country declared "a broad belt of Shantung had contracted a chronic habit of getting drowned."

"For many years the great highway from Peking to Tsinan (the capital of Shantung) had been interrupted each year by a waste of water from ten to twenty miles wide. This occupied a district fertile and full of villages. When the floods came with sudden violence through a huge gap in the double banks, villages were utterly washed away and crops buried out of sight. Later in the autumn the waters subsided, and then some of the survivors contrived to plant a little wheat in the soft residuum of mud, and were esteemed fortunate if it was reaped in time to escape the flood of the next summer." ¹

During the summer of 1887, the waters, as usual, came again; and a half-humorous, half-pitiful account is given of a journey across the flooded region: of "imperial roads become canals, with here and there a half-drowned village emerging from the flood, weak and dripping; of boat travel over lagoons that had been fields, and of carts travelling along the top of levees because the roads were under water." On a sudden, all was changed. "The overflow river, fifteen miles wide, which had so desolating an effect, flowed away almost as quickly

¹ "China's Prodigal Son": *North-China Herald*, November 24, 1887.

as it came: the real Yellow River no longer came, and its channel became quite useless for navigation. Great junks were helplessly stranded." . . . The change was as from hell to heaven; some districts rapidly recovered, and, within a fortnight, what had been an impassable swamp became actually dusty; in others, the condition of morass continued, and "boats and carts were to be seen struggling through the same waterway with nearly equal difficulty!" The explanation was that the waters were pouring out over Honan; and the inhabitants of Shantung felt a relief scarcely tempered, it is to be feared, by sympathy for their countrymen to whom the plague had been transferred. "It was a sight truly amazing to see square miles of mud . . . from which the waters had barely subsided, already tracked over by man and beast; the former guiding, the latter drawing, a simple sharp-pointed drill, which cut a slit in the mud and deposited therein grains of wheat."

It is painful to reflect that all this implied only a change of scene. From Shantung the river had turned to Anhuei, and the problem of how to deal with its fatal waters was simply transferred from north to south.

Having ascertained the predisposing causes of the disasters which have earned for the river its unenviable renown, we shall be able to appreciate more easily the circumstances of its latest outbreak.

The reader will do well, in order to obtain a clear impression of the Yellow River's vagaries, to take a

map of China and fix his attention on the thirty-fourth parallel of latitude. It is a little to the north of that parallel, in the angle of intersection of the 110th parallel of E. longitude, that it issues into the plain. It is again a little north of latitude 34° , in the angle between it and the 114th parallel, that is situated Kaifung, which may be indicated roughly as the pivot upon which it swings in its changes of course. It is along a line a little north of the 34th parallel that it ran for 500 years prior to 1851, from the head of its delta to the ocean; and it is exactly in latitude 34° that it then found an outlet into the Yellow Sea.¹ A few miles east of Kaifung occurred the breach through which it burst out when it accomplished its change of course; and it was a few miles west of Kaifung that it broke out, in 1887, towards the south.²

A town named Chêng, situated about half a degree west of Kaifung, marks the locality of the disaster. "Here," writes the Director-General of the river :—

¹ Note will also be taken of the Grand Canal which, starting from Chinkeang nearly in latitude 32° , runs from south to north across the plain, connecting the Yangtze with the Peiho, and which the Hwang-ho is obliged to cross at some point, on its way to the ocean.

² Experience seems to have convinced the Chinese of the danger of this locality, as General Wilson describes a huge embankment 40 to 50 ft. high, 50 to 60 ft. wide at the top, and 100 ft. wide at the base. Yet it is precisely through this great work that the river burst in 1851, 1868, and again in 1887. Richtofen says "the reason is that the embankments are made of fine sand, and cannot easily be kept in repair."

" (at the spot indicated) on the southern bank of the river, the water sweeps round a bend and dashes with its full force upon the tenth division, under the care of the lower guard-house in Chêng-chow. The banks here were of loose sand, and although they had been secured by fascines it was feared that they might be unable to withstand the furious onset of the current, and the authorities were directed to work night and day in strengthening them. In the more important places buttresses were erected to support the dykes, and the position seemed fairly secure when, all at once, the embankments gave way at a place where no works existed, and an overflow ensued. An attempt was made to stop the breach, but before it succeeded another opening was made farther up : the embankments, though tolerably strong and broad, suddenly collapsed one after another, and the waves ran mountains high over the top. . . ."

Thousands of men were hurried up to watch and strengthen the places that seemed most in danger, but all was in vain : the breach, once made, extended rapidly ; on the 25th and 26th of September, "the havoc was continued, and the embankments collapsed in over forty places." No sooner were repairs made than they were washed away ; and when, on the 1st of October, the Governor himself visited the spot, "the breach was still widening and there seemed no prospect of being able to close it." Still the main body of water was not diverted, and the fear seems hardly to have arisen that the disaster would attain its ultimate dimensions : but the work of demolition went on until the breach widened to three-quarters of a mile, through which poured the whole volume of the swollen river ; and, even at the risk of irritating the reader by Chinese names, I am tempted to quote the characteristic language of the Governor's

report upon the eventual catastrophe. It may be premised that *fu* means a prefecture, which can be taken roughly, for purposes of illustration, as about the size of an English county; and *hsien* a magisterial district, of which there are a varying number, averaging, perhaps, four or five in a prefecture.

"The localities affected," writes the Governor, "are situated in Kaifeng-*fu*, Chen-chow-*fu*, and Lui-*hsien* of Kuei-tê-*fu*. The breach occurred at Shih-Chiao-kow, and an impetuous torrent rushed from it towards the south-east. Overflowing the north-east of Chen-chow it descended upon Chung-mow-*hsien*, where the city was surrounded by water; 110 or 120 villages were overwhelmed and the land of more than 300 was inundated. The main flood then passed on to Chu-*hsien* Chen, round which several small places were overflowed, and at the same time it spread into the country of Hsiang-fu-*hsien*. Next in its course was Wei-shih-*hsien*, which was hemmed in by the waters. Then Fu-kow-*hsien* where there was a sea 100 li (33 miles) in breadth reaching to Yen-ling, where forty and more villages were drowned. To the eastward, in Tung-hsü, the water was seven or eight feet deep in some scores of villages, and a branch passed through Tai-kang and came down upon Lu-i-*hsien*. In Hsi-hua-*hsien*, which was in the direct line, thirty villages escaped entirely. Not far beyond this point the Chia-lu river meets the Sha-ho,¹ and below the junction the flood became more terrible than ever, and in Huai-ning 1500 villages were drowned. An offshoot to the south invaded Hsiang-cheng and Shen-chin, and one went to the north to Lu-i again, escaping into Anhwei by the Ming-ho and Huang-kou rivers." [The Governor then enumerates the districts which have suffered most severely, and relates the measures taken to relieve the survivors. To some places] "officers have been sent with money to help the local authorities in strengthening the defences which are keeping out the water. Others were despatched to other

¹ It was into the Sha that the overflow made its way in 1868-9.

places to hire boats and make rafts to bring away survivors, to supply food, and set up tents. . . . Where there are Government granaries, food will be furnished therefrom, and at other places it will be bought. . . . The land in Honan is flat, and the flood therefore is spreading out and moving forward but slowly. . . . According to information brought on the 11th of October, the Hwai river had risen two feet in western Anhwei."

If the reader will refer again to the map, he will see, a little to the south of Chêng, which has been indicated as the locality of the outbreak, several small rivers, of which the Yu and the Sha are the most prominent, flowing south-east in the direction of Anhwei. In about 32°30' N. the Sha joins the Hwai, which runs north-east in the direction of the Yellow Sea. The flood followed the same course, "sweeping," in the language of a later memorial, "the river Hwai with it to the sea, and drowning nearly all the people in the districts reached by the water; the survivors being those who escaped to high ground or took refuge in trees, where they remained till they were rescued."

The Hwai flows through the Hung-tze lake, crosses the Grand Canal, and finds an outlet into the sea nearly at the old embouchure of the Hwang-ho. The whole region is full of water-courses and lakes, some of which are divided from the Canal only by narrow strips of land and embankments; and it was feared that here would be a new overflow—that the flood would overtop the Canal dykes, break out on the west, and flood the low-lying districts of Kiangsu; for the Canal, like the Hwang-ho, is contained within artificial banks, and

raised by silt above the level of the surrounding country. How imminent was the danger and how great the anxiety, may be judged from an expression by the Viceroy of Nanking—that “the lives of millions” depended on the timely excavation of the channels he proposed opening for the conduct of the waters to the sea! And, as a matter of fact, the flood did rise to within one foot of the Canal bank: but its fury was then, happily, spent: the summer freshet was at end. Some no doubt found an outlet along the Hwai and other channels to the sea; more appears to have flowed south, by the chain of lakes and other watercourses, into the Yangtze; but the greater portion of the escaped water found occupation in converting the plains of Honan and Anhwei into a lake.

The Governor’s succinct account of the movement of the flood conveys only a faint impression of the ruin and suffering entailed. We must turn elsewhere than to Chinese official reports for a descriptive picture of the calamity; and one has only to choose among the letters of missionaries and others who visited the district. Mr. Paton, for instance, writing¹ from the very midst of the flooded region, shortly after the event, names eleven cities that had been submerged, and adds:

“In Cho-chia-kow itself [where he was staying] fifty streets are swept away, leaving only three business streets on the north side, which are all flooded. The west and south parts of the city are on opposite sides of the stream. The whole area is one raging

¹ In *North-China Herald*, November 16, 1887.

sea, 10 to 30 feet deep, where there was, only a month ago, a densely populated, rich plain. The newly-gathered crops, houses and trees, are all swept away, involving a fearful loss of life and complete destruction of next year's harvest. Cattle are sold for a mere nothing for food. Bread, bread, is the cry of thousands, who are all squatted on the river banks. . . . As far as I can find out, the area of water covering the land extends 400 li (133 miles) N.W. by 150 li (50 miles) N.E.; but I have not heard about the east side. The river is all coming this way now, and a racing, mad river it is. . . . Kaifung is now on the north side of the Yellow River. . . . The mass of the people [here] is still being increased by continual arrivals, each more wretched than the last. There they sit, stunned, hungry, stupid, and dejected, without a rag to wear or a morsel of food. Mat huts are being erected for them to the west of this; but what will it be during the bitter cold?"

Mr. Slimmon, writing from the same locality, pictures "a vast plain half the size of Scotland, thickly populated, turned suddenly into a raging sea." Nor, it must be remembered, was Honan the only sufferer. The flood poured across Anhwei; and a letter of the 28th of November describes a large area in that province as "more or less of a lake, with a river running through the centre." The following extracts from the report of a Chinese relief party will illustrate the situation:—

"3rd November. Reached Shao-chow. The west and north gates were closed and blocked; outside was a vast extent of water, only the eaves of houses and tops of trees appearing above. . . . The people had no means of removal, and relief was difficult to give, owing to their violence in fighting for money. Twenty miles above Shao-chow, the water was 10 feet above the ordinary level. . . . At Ying-chow and Fu-yang the inundations are spread over a still broader surface. At Taiho the water is 140 li (46 miles) broad. From Chieh-show to Chao-chia-kow (on the

borders of Honan) it is 53 miles broad. . . . The misery increases the farther you go. The houses there are built of mud, and crumble away when flooded. Not a day passes without people throwing themselves into the water. . . . Every night the sound of the winds and waters and the weeping and cries for help make a scene of unspeakable and cruel distress. . . ."

The area of country flooded was reckoned by thousands of square miles; the number of drowned was estimated at millions,¹ and must certainly have reached hundreds of thousands, while that of the survivors who were rendered homeless cannot be calculated in smaller figures.

Scarcely less striking, however, than the magnitude of the catastrophe is the capacity shown by the Authorities for coping with the distress which it entailed. The Emperor allotted at once £25,000 from his privy purse for purposes of relief, ordering large appropriations from the provincial revenues and 30,000,000 pounds of tribute rice, in further aid. Writing from Cho-chia-kow on December 24, Mr. Coulthard says :

"There was terrible distress for a time . . . but when I came

¹ The Peking correspondent of the *Times* wrote :—"The number of persons drowned in Honan can never be reckoned with any approach to accuracy, and can hardly even be guessed. Hazarding a conjecture, I should say it cannot be less than one million, and is probably not so high as two. Still, the European in Peking who is, by his relation with the Chinese Government, in a position to be better informed than any one else, has put the number at seven millions!"—Honan is one of the most populous provinces of the empire; we have seen the extent of the flood, and the Governor writes (*Peking Gazette*, October 28): "Nearly all the people have been drowned in the districts reached by the water."

here the Government had so provided for the need that, apart from the flooded state of the country, I should not have known there had been such a calamity. Upon the walls of the city I saw many of the poor refugees living in small tents and sheds, but all were provided with food and clothing. . . . Enclosures, containing about 1000 huts each, and from 4000 to 5000 souls, have been made, and the Government has provided, and will continue to do so during the winter, for their needs."

This has reference, however, to a large city and its neighbourhood. The writer and his colleagues were about starting to explore the country districts; and the following extract from a letter dated January 4 gives the experience of one of the travellers:—

"I have just returned from an attempt to get across the villages to the northward. I have been quite baffled, as it is all frozen. . . . The villagers in the high parts are doing the best they can to make their grain spin out. All who are completely cleaned out have gone to the huts. These have increased in number till they have now four encampments here, and over 30,000 people in them. Many thousand basins of millet and rice are given away to villagers who come; but so cold and wretched are these huts that if they can get anything they prefer to be in their own houses. For many miles I fought my way amongst the ice, and got [? found] only some caretakers in some villages. They get enough to keep life in. . . . It is very cold here, hard freezing, no snow. . . ."

Still, though the dole of food might be small, and the shelter of the most primitive description, the relief had been so efficient "that not a single case of starvation had been reported or rumoured." Nor did the authorities seem to weary of their task. A letter from Mr. Coulthard, dated so late as April, 1888, says: "the officials are even more liberal

now, with the enormous supplies received from the Government," than they were at the time of the New Year. Everywhere he and his colleagues found that the relief provided was sufficient. So convinced were they, indeed, of its efficacy that they refrained from distributing money subscribed by the foreign communities, deeming it unwise to interfere. "The local officials," Mr. Paton wrote, "would regard us as interfering with their work : the little we have to give away would not show, compared with the abundant supplies distributed by the Chinese ; and when a time of real need came, our funds being exhausted, we should not be able to avail ourselves of the opportunity for helping the distressed." Much time must elapse, under the most favourable conditions, before new crops could be gathered ; and there would be ample room for all the help that could be given in resettling the ruined families in the future.

It surprised many to find, in a country which has shown itself laxly organized in so many respects, the capacity to deal with a catastrophe that might have strained the resources of a highly organized State. But China is, as we constantly have reason to note, full of contradictions ; and even while the praiseworthy liberality of the Government was ably seconded by the local officials in the matter of relief, rumour became current that its intentions were being frustrated and its money grants diverted, through the neglect and speculation of the officials charged with the work of repair.

These had, as we have seen, to deal with a great undertaking. A stretch of embankment nearly a mile long had been swept away, and must be reconstructed during the period of low water if a fresh inundation were to be averted in the spring. Money was appropriated without stint, and the labour of myriads was available—that 4000 should have been whelmed at a stroke¹ was as nothing; thousands more would be forthcoming. But the task seemed to involve all the legendary punishments of Tantalus. Not even was the soil on the spot suitable for embankments, as it is sandy and yields too easily to the abrading influence of water. Earth had, therefore, to be brought in carts from a distance. But earth alone is not sufficiently binding, and millet-stalks have approved themselves to the Chinese as the most useful material for fascines: but neither were millet-stalks available in sufficient quantity, although the neighbouring provinces were swept to gather in supplies. Nor was it a question, simply, of rebuilding the levee; the difficulty was increased by the presence of the stream, which was pouring all this time through the breach, and must be checked when the moment of closure arrived. Its force during the winter might not be sufficient to prevent the reduction of the gap, by extending the embankment from

¹ Two thousand bamboo rafts had been laden with stones in order to create a breakwater, but no sooner had they reached the middle of the stream than they were engulfed with all on board.

either end; but the difficulty increased in exact proportion as the outlet was narrowed, for the reason that the current strove to regain, by erosure, a portion of the space it was losing.

That was the position as described in the spring, and by the end of June it became known that the work had failed. A great portion of the new embankment had been washed away, and the yellow flood was pouring out afresh over the plain. The failure is admitted, *more Asiatico*, not directly, but in the shape of a deprecatory request to be allowed more time; and the Imperial disappointment is vented in an edict bitterly denouncing all concerned.

We have received (runs the decree), this day, a memorial from Li Hung-tsoo and his colleagues at the Yellow River, stating that the autumn freshets are at hand, and asking permission to postpone the work until they had slightly subsided. The perusal of this report has caused us deep annoyance and vexation. Since the occurrence of the disaster in the eighth moon of last year (1887), we have repeatedly issued instructions to the Director-General of the Yellow River and his colleagues to lose no time in devising measures for closing the breach, and have at various times furnished them with funds to carry on the work, amounting in all to 9,000,000 taels. . . . But in spite of repeated and urgent reminders they remained inactive. . . . During spring the water was exceptionally low, and it was confidently hoped that the whole would be successfully finished before the autumn freshet. But mistakes were made in the methods pursued, proper energy was not thrown into the work, and so, when the freshet came, no closure was possible.¹

The edict goes on to censure severely all con-

¹ *Peking Gazette*, August 18th, 1888.

cerned, degrades the Director-General and banishes him to the military post roads, degrades Li Hung-tsao, but keeps him at his post, and appoints Wu Ta-cheng, who was at the time governor of Kwang-tung, to assume direction of the work.

The disappointment was genuine. Apart from any question of sympathy, such disasters cause grave anxiety, and the irritation was aggravated in the present case by the knowledge that there had been gross speculation as well as dilatoriness and neglect. These charges found expression, two months later, in a memorial¹ from a Censor, denouncing the Governor of Honan for incapacity and neglect, and his subordinates for speculation and oppression. The Governor had, it was alleged, left the work to district officers, and they to underlings, who "forced the country people to part with their materials without compensation." The farmers consequently burned the millet-stalks in their anger, rather than be robbed, and the works were delayed for want of materials. The man whom the Governor employed as his trusted agent was notoriously corrupt; a General Tsin, who was set to make an important canal, scamped it, and pocketed enormous sums. Li Hung-tsao, personally, was clean-handed, but much of the money supplied had been embezzled by others, and condemnation was invoked on all concerned.

Official interests in China are too complicated,

¹ *Peking Gazette*, October 10th.

and the art of speculation has been too carefully studied, for the trace of vanished money to be easily discerned. I remember hearing one who had opportunities of seeing much behind the scenes, describe how the funds in question had probably travelled from the Imperial to the Provincial capital and back, by round-about ways, to Peking ; friction and wastage occurring all along the route, but traces carefully covered up behind the melting snowball as it rolled. Wu Ta-cheng, to whom the investigation was referred, failed, at any rate, to inculcate a tithe of those who had been concerned. One or two of the worst were selected as scapegoats ; but after much bribery, doubtless, and further "transacting," the majority escaped with their ill-gotten gain.

Wu had enough to do, moreover, at the breach, without spending time over a hopeless quest. A fresh inundation was inevitable for 1888 ; but his reputation was involved in completing the repairs during the winter of 1888-9. It would be wearisome to recapitulate the methods he employed. The chief seems to have been, broadly speaking, to construct a breakwater above the breach, and to dig a channel capable of diverting the comparatively moderate winter stream. The difficulty was to find anything that would hold ; his predecessors had tried fascines, and his subordinates continued to advocate them, but he found that they were simply washed away ; so he threw in stones. " To throw stones into a current of thirty or forty

feet of water might seem, at first sight, a waste of money ; but he found by experience that they had the desired effect of diverting the current from the banks." And this experience led him to condemn the whole system to which he considered the accident was due. Earlier engineers had relied on breakwaters, at intervals, to divert the current from the banks ; whereas later efforts had been directed to strengthening the banks themselves. But experience showed that the banks were eroded as fast as repaired, and he proposed reverting to a system which was approved by experience and common sense.

His efforts were successful. He took charge in August, and by the end of January the breach had been closed. The accomplishment of the task is announced in the *Peking Gazette* of January 31st; and successive edicts shower praise and rewards upon all concerned.

On January 11th (runs the Imperial utterance) operations were sufficiently advanced to allow the opening of the canal which should conduct the water away from the gap. On the 17th the embankment heads were united by cables stretched across, and on the 20th, after two days and nights of unremitting exertions, the narrow opening remaining was completely closed, all the waters of the river flowing away in the old channel. The Emperor feels that this speedy success is due to the unseen aid of heaven and the gods. As a sign of his deep gratitude he sends ten sticks of Thibetan incense, which he desires Wu Ta-cheng to offer with prayers and thanks, on his behalf, at the temple of the river gods in the vicinity of the works.

But neither is the credit due to human agents

overlooked. Wu is given a button of the first class, and confirmed in his appointment of Director-General of the Yellow River, while Li Hung-tsao and others, who had been deprived of rank and variously punished for earlier remissness, are reinstated and given various rewards.

The question was actively debated, while the works were going on, whether it might not be wise to accept and try to control the new channel which the river seemed willing to adopt. The river had, it was said, shown by its movement that that was its natural course; and that course had moreover the advantage of presenting something like a natural channel. The section of the plain through which it runs is of vast area, but it has high land on both sides for a great portion of the distance.¹ Besides, if millions of acres had been submerged in the south, thousands of square miles had been drained in the north. Shantung was now fairly dry; all the once flooded lands were free from water, and the inhabitants of Shantung were as averse² to the river's return as

¹ *Vide* letters in *North-China Herald* from Dr. A. Williamson, who had travelled over the whole region in question more extensively than probably any other European. Dr. Williamson argues (and in this he is supported by (*) Mr. J. C. Fergusson, Asst., M.I.C.E., who writes in the same paper) that embankments should be abandoned, as tending to concentrate and contain the silt, and thus inevitably perpetuate the raising of its bed and the consequent recurring outbreaks.

² One cause, indeed, of the millet-stalk difficulty is said to be

those of Honan were anxious for its departure. Amid such a choice of evils, let it continue in the channel it had chosen ; and let the lakes remain as reservoirs for the flood-water, and areas to relieve it of its silt,³ as the great Tungting and Poyang lakes receive and clarify the flood-water of the Yangtze. But the idea was never, I believe, seriously entertained. The Authorities of Kiangsu might work energetically to make wider outlets for the Hwai river, but it was with a view to expedite the draining of the flood-waters into the Yellow Sea, rather than to provide a permanent outlet for the stream. The Central Government had evidently no other thought, from the first, than to lead it back north ; and was deepening channels and repairing embankments in Shantung, while Wu Ta-cheng was working at the breach.

Wu had perceived, however, that the problem must be dealt with on a larger scale, if the river were to be brought under permanent control. He proposed, accordingly, to institute a Board of River Surveyors. The first essential in dealing with such a waterway was, he urged, to have an accurate knowledge of its course and characteristics : so it should be effectively surveyed and mapped ; “ but there was no person amongst the officials and

that the populace in Shantung destroyed by fire an immense quantity that had been collected for use at the breach—willing to hinder work that would result in bringing back the torment from which Heaven had delivered them.

literati of Honan who possessed an exact knowledge of mathematics or surveying." He had written, accordingly, to Canton, Tientsin and Foo-chow, asking that students acquainted with surveying and map-making might be selected, and sent him from the Arsenal schools. With their aid he would have a complete survey made of the river itself and the adjacent country. But as it could not be expected that these men would come from a distance and undertake such a difficult task without encouragement, he asked that their names might be noted at Peking and that they be held entitled to rewards on the same scale as those granted to officers employed in inaugurating telegraphs. The project was supported by the Chief Authorities of the provinces through which the river runs, and would have seemed likely to commend itself to a Government which had just disbursed more than Tls. 9,000,000 in meeting one of the catastrophes which the memorialist hoped to avert. Here was an opportunity too, if ever, for encouraging the mathematical studies which it was desired to promote. Plenty of officials might have been found who would make such charts as had satisfied river officials before; but Wu wanted a scientific survey, by men trained in Western methods. It is significant of the obstructive influences which work against all reform, that the Emperor was induced to reject the proposal—a proposal, too, coming from one of the foremost men in China—with something like a snub. "We sanction (runs the Impe-

rial rescript), the transfer of a number of officials for the work of surveying and chart-making; but as the proposed establishment of a Board of Surveyors and the consideration of the rewards to be bestowed upon them is premature and ostentatious, we command that no notice be taken of the suggestion."

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APPENDIX.

APPENDIX A.

EDUCATIONAL REFORM.

Memorial by Prince Kung on the Establishment of a College for the Cultivation of Western Science (1866).

YOUR Majesty's servant and other Ministers of the Council for Foreign Affairs, on their knees present this memorial in regard to regulations for teaching Astronomy and the selection of students.

These sciences being indispensable to the understanding of machinery and the manufacture of firearms, we have resolved on erecting for this purpose a special department in the Tung-wên College, to which scholars of a high grade may be admitted, and in which men from the West shall be invited to give instruction.

The scheme having met with your Majesty's approval, we beg to state that it did not originate in a fondness for novelties or in admiration for the abstract subtleties of Western science; but solely from the consideration that the mechanical arts of the West all have their source in the science of mathematics. Now, if the Chinese Government desires to introduce the building of steamers, and construction of machinery, and yet declines to borrow instruction from the men of the West, there is danger lest, following our own ideas, we should squander funds to no purpose.

We have weighed the matter maturely before laying it before the Throne. But among persons who are unacquainted with the subject, there are some who will regard this matter as unimportant; some who will censure us as wrong in abandoning the

methods of China for those of the West ; and some who will even denounce the proposal that Chinese should submit to be instructed by the people of the West, as shameful in the extreme. Those who urge such objections are ignorant of the demands of the times.

In the first place, it is high time that some plan should be devised for infusing new elements of strength into the government of China. Those who understand the times are of opinion that the only way for effecting this, is to introduce the learning and mechanical arts of Western nations. Provincial governors such as Tso Tsung-tang and Li Hung-chang are firm in this conviction, and constantly presenting it in their addresses to the Throne. The last mentioned officer last year opened an arsenal for the manufacture of arms, and invited men and officers from the metropolitan garrison to go there for instruction ; while the other established in Foochow a school for the study of foreign languages and arts, with a view to the instruction of young men in shipbuilding and the manufacture of engines. The urgency of such studies is, therefore, an opinion which is not confined to us, your servants.

Should it be said that the purchase of firearms and steamers has been tried, and found to be both cheap and convenient, so that we may spare ourselves the trouble and expense of home production, we reply that it is not merely the manufacture of arms, and the construction of ships, that China needs to learn. But in respect to these two objects, which is the wiser course in view of the future, to content ourselves with purchase, and leave the source of supply in the hands of others, or to render ourselves independent by making ourselves masters of their arts, it is hardly necessary to inquire.

As to the imputation of abandoning the methods of China, is it not altogether a fictitious charge ? For, on inquiry, it will be found that Western science had its root in the astronomy of China, which Western scholars confess themselves to have derived from Eastern lands. They have minds adapted to reasoning and abstruse study, so that they were able to deduce from it new arts which shed a lustre on those nations, but, in reality, the original belonged to China, and Europeans learned them from us. If, therefore, we apply ourselves to those studies, our future progress will be built on our own foundation. Having the root in

our possession, we shall not need to look to others for assistance, an advantage which it is impossible to overestimate.

As to the value to be set on the science of the West, your illustrious ancestor, Kanghi, gave it his hearty approbation, promoting its teachers to offices of conspicuous dignity, and employing them to prepare the Imperial calendar; thus setting an example of liberality equalled only by the vastness of his all-comprehending wisdom. Our dynasty ought not to forget its own precedents, especially in relation to a matter which occupied the first place among the studies of the ancients.

In olden times, yeomen and common soldiers were all acquainted with astronomy; but in later ages an interdict was put upon it, and those who cultivated this branch of science became few. In the reign of Kanghi, the prohibition was removed, and astronomical science once more began to flourish. Mathematics were studied together with the classics, the evidence of which we find in the published works of several schools. A proverb says, "A thing unknown is a scholar's shame." Now, when a man of letters on stepping from his door raises his eyes to the stars, and is unable to tell what they are, is not this enough to make him blush? Even if no schools were established the educated ought to apply themselves to such studies, how much more so when a goal is proposed for them to aim at?

As to the allegation that it is a shame to learn from the people of the West, this is the absurdest charge of all. For, under the whole heaven, the deepest disgrace is that of being content to lag in the rear of others. For some tens of years the nations of the West have applied themselves to the study of steam navigation, each imitating the others, and daily producing some new improvement. Recently, too, the Government of Japan has sent men to England for the purpose of acquiring the language and science of Great Britain. This was with a view to the building of steamers, and it will not be many years before they succeed.

Of the jealous rivalry among the nations of the Western Ocean, it is unnecessary to speak; but when so small a country as Japan is putting forth all its energies, if China alone continues to tread indolently in the beaten track, without a single effort in the way of improvement, what can be more disgraceful than this? Now, not to be ashamed of our inferiority, but when a measure is proposed by which we may equal or even surpass our neighbours,

to object to the shame of learning from them, and for ever refusing to learn, to be content with our inferiority—is not such meanness of spirit itself an indelible reproach?

If it be said that machinery belongs to artisans, and that scholars should not condescend to such employments, in answer to this we have a word to say. Why is it that the book in the *Chao-li*, on the structure of chariots, has for some thousands of years been a recognized text-book in all the schools? Is it not because, while mechanics do the work, scholars ought to understand the principles? When principles are understood, their application will be extended. The object which we propose for study to-day is the principles of things. To invite educated men to enlarge the sphere of their knowledge by investigating the laws of nature is a very different thing from compelling them to take hold of the tools of the working man. What other point of doubt is left for us to clear up?

In conclusion, we would say that the object of study is utility, and its value must be judged by its adaptation to the wants of the times. Outsiders may vent their doubts and criticisms, but the measure is one that calls for decisive action. Your servants have considered it maturely. As the enterprise is a new one, its principles ought to be carefully examined. To stimulate candidates to enter in earnest on the proposed curriculum, they ought to have a liberal allowance from the public treasury to defray their current expenses, and have the door of promotion set wide open before them. We have accordingly agreed on six regulations, which we herewith submit to the eye of your Majesty, and wait reverently for the Imperial sanction.

We are of opinion that the junior members of the Hanlin Institute, being men of superior attainments, while their duties are not onerous, if they were appointed to study astronomy and mathematics would find those sciences an easy acquisition. With regard to scholars of the second and third grades, as also mandarins of the lower ranks, we request your Majesty to open the portals, and admit them to be examined as candidates, that we may have a larger number from whom to select men of ability for the public service.

Laying this memorial before the throne, we beseech the Empresses Regent and the Emperor to cast on it their sacred glance, and to give us their instructions.—*North-China Herald*.

APPENDIX B.

EDUCATIONAL REFORM.

A Memorial from the Tsung-li Yamên, submitting a proposal for the introduction of Mathematics and other Western sciences into the civil Competitive Examinations (1887).

ON the 18th April, 1887, the Grand Council received an Imperial Rescript wherein Her Majesty the Empress acknowledged the receipt of a memorial from a censor, one Ch'ên Cho-ying, proposing the granting of literary degrees to mathematicians, and requesting that, in appointing secretaries and others for our diplomatic service abroad, the applicants should be chosen from those officials who have travelled in foreign countries. He also proposed the purchase of irrigation machinery from abroad.

Upon receipt of the above memorial, Her Majesty ordered the Tsung-li Yamên, in conjunction with the Boards of Revenue and Ceremonies and Prince Chun, to consider the measures proposed, and submit a memorial thereon.

Accordingly, in obedience to the Imperial commands, we have deliberated upon the matter in question, and, lifting our heads, we humbly perceive the solicitude of our Sacred Sovereign, which embraces everything which concerns the national welfare, being specially circumspect in the bestowal of civil ranks and most earnest in encouraging men of talent. Such solicitude can never be forgotten.

With reference to the memorial of the censor above referred to, we find that the memorialist proceeds to say :—

“Since the beginning of intercourse with Western countries, the arsenals, dockyards, the Tung-wên College at Peking, and the Fang Yuan Kuan at Shanghai have been the resorts for the

acquisition of Western learning and Western sciences. There are, indeed, to be found young men who, going abroad in their youth, have mastered the Western arts, such as surveying, drawing, mechanics, and other branches; but judging from their conversation, these have become totally denationalized, and think it necessary to adopt foreign methods in all their doings.

"The different boards and metropolitan yamens having recently been called upon to recommend candidates for going abroad, the memorialist would suppose the officials would embrace this opportunity to acquire knowledge of Western affairs, yet three months have passed by and no recommendations have been heard of. Thus, it is evident that those who are zealous for Western knowledge cannot be easily found. Mathematics being the foundation of all the Western sciences, any one who would master them must start from that foundation; and although it is by no means necessary, or even perhaps possible, that one should master several of the sciences, yet when he has obtained a thorough mastery of mathematics, it will be easy to make further researches. The Kuo Tzu Chien, Imperial National Academy, was established for the study of mathematics, and in more recent years, the different provincial examiners have added mathematics to the list of their examinations. Therefore, the memorialist would earnestly pray that Her Majesty direct the examiners to make a report of the examinations in mathematics, and allot an extra number of honours for the successful candidates in that study; that the original examination papers be submitted to the inspection of the Tsung-li Yamên, and the graduates be ranked as official students of mathematics; and that at the provincial examinations the first and second trials shall be in the "Four Books" and five classics; but in the third, in accordance with the rules governing the examination of Manchu interpreters, the five themes to be given shall be on mathematics, and the literary degrees be conferred on the successful candidates, in addition to the regulation number of graduates in purely literary studies. The same rule to be applied to the Metropolitan examinations, the successful graduates from which to be employed in the capital, or be sent abroad, where they may pursue further studies in the various educational institutions of Europe; and on their return, after the completion of their studies, they shall be placed in the department of foreign affairs, to be appointed to our diplomatic service

abroad. In this way official advancement will be through a regular course, and our officers will no longer be the contempt of modern times. Nor, on the one hand, will they be like those who, professing to know foreign affairs, are really ignorant, or, on the other, like those who are inclined to be partisans of foreigners, and ready to create trouble."

Such were the words of the censor, as contained in his memorial, and it is our opinion that plans for encouraging men of talent and learning should be suited to the circumstances of the times. During the years of 1866 and 1867 the Tsung-li Yamên in a memorial to the Throne, proposed the examination of students in mathematics, who, in conformity with the rule in force at the Tung-wên Kuan in Canton, were to be appointed to official positions at the expiration of three years' study.

If the candidate were a Manchu he was to have the grade of official interpreter, and be allowed to take part in the provincial examinations for literary and other degrees. If he were a Chinese he was to be classed as a Kien Shêng (Collegian of the Imperial Academy), and be further privileged to participate in the provincial examinations, and both the Chinese and Manchus who were successful were to be appointed expectant interpreters. This memorial was sanctioned by Imperial Decree, in the hope that the measures therein proposed would encourage and stimulate students, and open a path for their personal advancement, so that in future years they might attain to positions of honour and fame.

But inasmuch as there were existing established rules governing the selection of graduates at the metropolitan and provincial examinations, it was most difficult to introduce innovations. Consequently, during the middle of Taokwang's reign, although in a memorial from the then Viceroy of the Two Kwangs, Chi Kung, he classed mechanics and mathematics as one of the five learned professions, and again at the beginning of Hienfêng's reign, the Censor Wang Mao-yin made reference to it, lastly, in the year 1870, the Viceroy of Fuhkien and Chêkiang, Ying Kuei, and others, in a memorial, advocated the introduction of mathematics; in each case the boards decided that the proposed measure was in violation of established usages, and the matter was stopped.

Mathematics, however, is classed as one of the six arts (these

being propriety, music, archery, charioteering, study, and mathematics), and during the Chow dynasty, in advancing their men of talent and virtue, they considered those who understood mathematics as belonging to the six professions, and in the Tang dynasty, men qualified in mathematics were selected for official preferment.

Our country had, in the remote past, framed a set of mathematical treatises which have served as models for hundreds of ages, and the National Academy was subsequently established, where a prescribed number of young men might be instructed in mathematics, the number to consist proportionately of Manchu, Mongolian, and Chinese, and the term of study to be several years. But mathematics, in order to be mastered, must be begun when one is young.

Our sacred sovereigns of successive dynasties, in their far-reaching schemes of improvement availed themselves of the help of Western mathematics, which they combined with our own, and in constructing their orreries, Chi Taos (equators), and other scientific representations that have remained standing monuments of their skill, and in manufacturing firearms and munitions of war, they borrowed the help of Western methods. During the reign of Kanghi, when wars with feudal states were frequent, two officers attached to the Board of Astronomy, Nan Huai-jên and Tang Jo-wang, were ordered, by Imperial command, to manufacture arms for the use of the army. These are historical facts adduced to prove the force of our arguments. But people of the present day who regard mathematics as a purely Western science have not given the subject their serious attention.

As for Western scholars, we find that half their men of talent and capacity are drawn from their philosophical schools, which develop their intellects by the study of logic, and the other half spring from their marine, because the experience they gain by visiting different parts of the world emboldens their hearts and expands their knowledge. Progress or retrogression, therefore, does not depend simply on understanding the niceties of literary composition.

Trigonometry and its collateral subjects are truly the foundation of Western sciences, yet, although one must begin with that study, he cannot stop here. Consequently, on both our southern and northern sea-boards there have been established arsenals,

training schools, military and naval academies, and those who complete the course of instruction in these institutions are placed on board training ships, and those who are more advanced are appointed to positions in our navy. In this way it is hoped men of ability will be trained up to serve the country.

In order, however, to encourage young men to apply themselves to Western studies, it is necessary that there should be an efficient system of selection and promotion. We, the Ministers, in our deliberations, are aware that the regulations governing the civil competitive examinations cannot be lightly changed, yet, for the sake of encouraging men of ability, the existing methods might be modified. It is proposed, therefore, that His Majesty direct the Provincial Literary Chancellors to issue at the competitive examinations, besides the subject usually given in the classics and poetry, a theme on mathematics; and should there be candidates for honours in that study, and they be found proficient, that their examination papers be submitted to the inspection of the Tsung-li Yamên, and their names be officially registered. That, further, when the provincial examination occurs, the successful graduates first proceed to the Tsung-li Yamên and there submit themselves to an examination in the following subjects, philosophy, mathematics, mechanics, engineering, naval and military tactics, marine artillery, torpedoes, international law and history; and should any one be proficient in any of the above subjects, that he be sent to compete at the civil literary examinations in Peking under the same conditions as the other candidates; and in case of there being over twenty applicants the word "mathematics" shall be stamped upon their examination papers, but no extra paper of this study need be given on this occasion.

The examination papers of these students shall be handed in from the "outside screen" to the "inside screen," and out of every twenty candidates one shall be selected, provided that he is a thorough master of rhetoric; otherwise, rather than select unproficient graduates, no candidates will be accepted at all. And, however great the number of applicants may be, no more than three shall be selected at one time, in order to maintain a fixed limit.

The papers of the candidates at the probationary examination, held under the direction of the Tsung-li Yamên, shall be handed in by the latter to the inspection and keeping of the Board of

Ceremonies ; and when the metropolitan examination occurs, the provincial graduates who have passed successfully in mathematics shall take part, under the same conditions as all the other candidates, selection to be made entirely in accordance with their literary proficiency.

By adopting the above modifications for securing men of varied accomplishments, the existing regulations for examining and promoting literary men will not be changed, while they serve the important purpose of encouraging men of talent. With regard to those in the different military and naval schools and on board training ships, who have mastered their respective professions, and are already in official position but who do not desire to subject themselves to the competitive examinations, it shall be the duty of the minister in charge of the respective schools to recommend them for promotion, in accordance with the time of their services. But the conditions governing such men shall be entirely different from those imposed upon candidates who participate in the literary examinations. Those of the latter class who graduate successfully from the metropolitan examinations will be retained at the capital, and wait for appointments to the Tung-wên College, where they will act as compilers, and devote themselves to further study until they may be sent to travel abroad, or receive diplomatic appointments, selection to be made from time to time in accordance with merit and ability. In this manner those who manage our foreign relations will not be empty babblers, and they will, moreover, excel in usefulness those who are proficient only in Western arts, without the complimentary literary qualifications.

The censor we have above quoted, in a postscript memorial, requests that applicants for going abroad shall be impartially recommended by the officers of the Boards, and their selection be approved at the "metropolitan scrutiny." We find that this "metropolitan scrutiny" is an important ordinance, carrying with it a restriction to the candidates recommended by the different *yamêns*, who, besides being "first class," must be attached to the *yamêns* in some official capacity, and their merits and learning, their diligence or indolence must have been looked into by their respective superiors, and their competency for the position proved, before they shall be admitted to the "metropolitan scrutiny."

Those who are sent out of the capital on official service shall, during the first half year, have their acts examined into and recorded by their yamêns, but after that it shall be the duty of the yamên wherein they are employed to take cognizance of their acts, inasmuch as the long separation will place those in the capital at a disadvantage in ascertaining their doings. With regard to those who are sent on a travelling tour abroad, the distance of the separation being still greater, it will be impracticable for the yamên officials to ascertain whether or not an officer who evinces commendable energy at home maintains his zeal and studiousness abroad, and it will not do to record his doings at random.

It is proposed, therefore, that those who are really meritorious and pre-eminent in their respective yamêns and may obtain "first-class," and pass at the "metropolitan scrutiny," should be eligible to be sent abroad; and during the first half year of their service, they shall be regarded as "first-class" candidates for promotion, but after that it shall be the duty of the respective ambassadors to look after their conduct, and, if their ability and character are satisfactory, to submit their names to the Tsung-li Yamên for submission to the Throne for the bestowal of promotion. But they shall not be further examined at the "metropolitan scrutiny." Those whose term of service at the capital has expired shall first be sent to have audience of His Majesty, and then their names will be recorded for future appointments. And when the names of any have to be submitted to the Throne, it shall be by the Board of Ceremonies through the Grand Council; and whenever any vacancy occurs it shall be in the pleasure of His Majesty to appoint these expectant officials. But those who are to be selected to office by the Boards shall also receive their appointments from them.—*Chinese Times*.

[The memorial extends to greater length, but the foregoing contains all that is important in it.]

APPENDIX C.

RAILWAYS.

A Memorial from the Board of Admiralty submitting a proposal for the experimental introduction of a railway at Tientsin and other places, in order to facilitate the movement of troops and the transport of material of war, and to increase the profits of the mercantile classes (1887).

THE introduction of railways has been under discussion for several years. Some have argued in their favour and others adversely, so that no definite conclusion has been come to. The Memorialist I-huan (Prince Chun) has frequently heard these oft repeated opinions, and his own views were at one time opposed to the innovation ; but since the recent campaign, and since he himself visited the northern seaports, he has become aware that these adverse opinions are not in accordance with the true interests of the State. When the Prince inspected the sea ports with Li Hung-chang and Shan Ching, the question of railways frequently formed the subject of their deliberations. Moreover, when he presided over the Tsung-li Yamên he obtained a clear insight into affairs, and considered thoroughly the means of remedying the difficulties of the time.

Tsêng Ki-tsê (the Marquis Tsêng) has been ambassador in foreign countries for eight years, and has himself studied the railway systems of other nations, their utility in providing for the transport of troops and material, their immense benefit to the people, the large issues they involve, and the very great advantages to be derived from them, and he has seen that they not only afford protection to the frontier and a stimulus to the

trade of the people, but at the same time are in no way attended with danger or impediment to the State. Since his appointment to the Tsung-li Yamên he has devoted much thought to this matter, and made many inquiries, which have resulted in his entire agreement with the views set forth in this Memorial.

In our deliberations we have duly recognized the fact that the circumstances of China have from ages past differed widely from those of other nations; and while we are fully cognizant of the many and great advantages to be derived from railways, we have not been blind to the financial difficulties, nor to the objections that might exist to an unsightly network of railways being spread like a web over the land, as is the case in many countries.

On the other hand, when we consider the important advantages to be gained in the facility and rapidity with which troops and material can be moved from place to place, we are convinced of the desirability of taking the best measures in this direction. One should not look at one side of a question.

In the midst of our deliberations on this matter, a report was received from the Tientsin Salt Commissioner, the Taotai, and the officers in command of the various garrisons, to the following effect:—

“The sea-board of Pechili, stretching for a distance of some 700 *li*, consists for the most part of shoals and sand banks, though there are many places where small craft can reach the shore. But, besides Taku and Pei-t'ang, where steamers can anchor near the shore, along the whole coast from Shan Hai-kuan to Yang Ho-k'ou, a distance of over 100 *li*, there is not a single place where the water is not deep and the waves high.

The port of Taku is distant from Shan Hai-kuan about 500 *li*, and in the summer and autumn the coast roads are so covered with water and obstructed with mud that carts laden with merchandise cannot travel more than twenty or thirty *li*, in a day. Indeed, in some places the road is often quite impassable, so that it is to be feared that in the event of a surprise we should be slow in meeting the emergency. Moreover, the Northern and Southern Garrisons are too widely separated, and it would be difficult to come to the rescue in time of need. We cannot, therefore, neglect to station troops at the most important and exposed places, occupying beforehand those points where the first struggle will take place, thus displaying the might of the

nation, as it were, before her gates. But on the portion of the sea coast nearest to Peking, from Taku and Pei-t'ang northwards for a distance of 500 *li*, the garrisons are few in number and the gaps between them are a great source of danger. If they were united by a line of railway, in any case of emergency, troops dispatched in the morning could arrive at their post in the evening, the soldiers of one garrison would suffice for the protection of several places, and the cost of maintaining the army could be greatly reduced.

In the seventh year of Kwangsü, the Kaiping Mining Company laid down twenty *li* of railway. Subsequently, to facilitate the coaling of vessels of war, the line was extended sixty *li* to the southward, as far as Yen-chuang on the river Chi. This line occupies the central portion of the road between Pei-t'ang and Shan Hai-kuan, a tract of the highest importance as regards military transport. If this railway be carried through, southwards, to the north bank of the river at Taku, and northwards to Shan Hai-kuan, the 10,000 men under the command of the General Chou Shên-po can be moved backwards and forwards along this distance of several tens of *li*, and serve all the purposes of many times their number. Should this appear to be too great an undertaking, or the difficulty of furnishing the necessary capital be found insurmountable, it is requested that the eighty odd *li* of railway from Yen-chuang to the north bank of the river at Taku be first constructed, after which the one hundred and more *li* of road from Taku to Tientsin can be gradually completed. If something over 1,000,000 taels can be raised, this work could be carried out in due course. The Tientsin-Taku railway once completed, the line from Kaiping northward to Shan Hai-kuan can then be taken into consideration.

This is a matter of the very highest importance for the defence of the sea-board. If the capital cannot at once be collected from merchants by the issue of shares, it should be furnished by the Government, and soldiers should be employed to assist in carrying out the work, in order to secure its speedy completion.

Moreover, the coal used by the Pei Yang fleet is all obtained from Kaiping, and it is, as it were, the life and pulse of the navy. If the Kaiping railway is extended to the north bank of the river at Taku, the coal can be conveyed from the mines on board the ships in half a day ; and if the line is continued from Taku to

Tientsin, it can be utilized for the carriage of merchandise, and the freights received from the foreign traders will help towards the maintenance of the railway.

If this scheme is authorized, the work should be placed in the hands of the Kaiping Railway Company, so that economy in expenditure and labour may be secured. It is further requested that a high official of unimpeachable integrity may be appointed to undertake the supreme administration."

This joint petition was received by the Memorialists.

The Memorialists find that the railway proposed in the joint petition of the Salt Commissioner, the Taotai, and the officers of the garrisons, which would run from Yen-chuang to the north bank of the river at Taku, a distance of more than eighty *li*, would lie mostly at the back of Taku and Pei-t'ang, some tens of *li* from the sea shore; and there is evidently no fear of its becoming the object of attack by the enemy; but funds will be necessary for its permanent maintenance. They therefore request that a line may be gradually constructed from Taku to Tientsin, one hundred or more *li*, which may be relied upon as a means of obtaining the funds in question, and thus both military and commercial interest will derive an equal advantage. The country will be protected at ordinary times, and in special emergencies defensive measures will be facilitated. In case of defeat the rolling stock can be withdrawn, the line taken up, the military stores buried, and the advance of the enemy need not be feared.

The Memorialists have attentively considered this petition, and they now request that the scheme may be sanctioned. They beg that it may be entrusted to the Kaiping Railway Company, and that the former provincial treasurer of Fuhkien, Shên Pao-ching, whose services have been retained in connection with the Northern Squadron, and Chow Fu, acting Salt Commissioner, Superintendent of Customs at Tientsin, may be appointed conjointly to administer the affair, and direct the officials and merchants connected with it.

In the autumn of this year the new war vessels ordered from England and Germany should reach China, and next year the Memorialist I-huan will proceed to the seaport and with Li Hung-chang and his colleagues arrange for the formation of the first division of the navy. They can at the same time inspect the

railway. If it is found to be useful and free from objections, they would suggest that similar plans be put into operation in the various mining districts of the country.

The Memorialists venture to present this Memorial to her Majesty the Empress, being moved thereto by the necessity of the times and their desire for the welfare of the nation.

APPENDIX D.

PROSPECTUS OF THE FIRST CHINESE RAILWAY.

RECENTLY the Board of Admiralty submitted a memorial to the Throne, proposing the construction of a railway from Yenchuang to Lutai, Peitang, and the north shore of Taku to Tientsin and other places, the total length of the contemplated railway being about eighty *li*, in order to facilitate the transport of troops and war material, and for the convenience and benefit of the mercantile classes. It was also proposed to place the construction and management of the new line in the hands of this company. This memorial received the sanction of her Imperial Majesty the Empress, and the matter has been placed on record. On account of the doubts existing in the public mind as to the ability of the Kaiping Railway to make substantial profits, the following statement, showing the working returns of the existing railway between Yen Chuang and Kaiping, is subjoined :—

The annual freightage of coal can be guaranteed not to fall short of Tls. 30,000 ; from limestone and sundry merchandise the annual freightage will be from Tls. 10,000 to Tls. 20,000 ; from passenger traffic, over Tls. 10,000. Deducting Tls. 20,000 or Tls. 30,000 from the above earnings for expenses, working and maintaining the railway, there remains a balance sufficient to pay a dividend of from 5 or 6 to, if all goes well as expected, 10 per cent. If the line is extended to Taku and Tientsin, it will pass through various salterns, towns, villages and landing-places of the steamers, from all of which it will be easy to obtain considerable and adequate freight, and the profit derivable therefrom cannot possibly fall below that obtained at the Yenchuang-Kaiping section of the road. Therefore no one need doubt the ability of the

entire line to pay an annual dividend of from 5 or 6, or even, when traffic is developed, 10 per cent. The company now desires to increase the capital by Tls. 1,000,000, and this sum it is proposed to raise by issuing 10,000 shares of Tls. 100 per share. A set of regulations have been prepared. In the administration of affairs, this company will adhere strictly to economy and efficiency untrammelled by official direction, and by not allowing foreign merchants to squander the capital; but the chief aim will be the establishment of an administrative system free from faults and beneficial to the company, a system that will not relax into remissness, nor allow the company to exist only in name as some companies in China have done. If any gentlemen should desire to become shareholders, they are requested to send their names and addresses, together with the number of shares they wish to subscribe, to the company's head office at Tientsin, for registration, and the share money should be deposited with the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank at Tientsin, in return for which the company's share certificates and passbook will be given. Those friends residing in other ports who wish to subscribe for shares are invited to call at the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank offices in their respective ports, and having registered their application for shares, deposit the money with the bank and receive provisional receipts until such time as the company is able to issue regular share certificates, when the bank receipts must be given up for cancellation. Although the capital that is now subscribed is intended for the construction of the Yenchuang Taku Railway, yet should the line be hereafter extended, any money on hand will be used for such extension, consideration being taken according to the respective priority of the shareholders, those having entered their shares first being entitled to such preference as may justly be due. As this company is formed on an upright and trustworthy basis, and will never fail to act up to its principles, it is to be hoped that gentlemen wishing to become shareholders will not hesitate or delay.

The distance from Kaiping to Yenchuang is ninety *li*, and the new railroad will be extended from the latter place to Lutai, Peitang, Taku, and Tientsin, a distance of 180 *li*. It is now proposed to issue 10,000 shares at Tls. 100 per share, bringing the capital of the new company up to Tls. 1,000,000. Shares can be obtained by applying to the Kaiping Railway Company at

Tientsin, or to the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation at the various ports. Although the share certificates only mention the railroad as being extended from Yenchuang to Taku and Tientsin, these shares will also include any further extension of the company's line that may be made hereafter. The shareholders of the Kaiping Railway Company will have the same interest in the new company. H.E. Shun Ping-lin, formerly the Provincial Treasurer of Fukien, and H.E. Chow Yuk-son, Customs Taotai of Tientsin, have been appointed general managers of the company. Messrs. Ng Choy and Ng Nan-ko, the managers of the Kaiping Railway Company, will also be the managers of the new company. The management will be carried on on purely mercantile principles, and the board of directors will be consulted on all important business. The regulations of foreign railway companies will be observed and imitated as far as possible. After twelve months' working of the line, a general report will be issued for the information of the shareholders, and all important questions will be discussed at the annual meetings.

APPENDIX E.

THE HANYANG IRON AND STEEL MILLS.

THE following description is taken from a report by Mr. Child, U.S. Consul at Hankow :—

“One of the marvels of this marvellous country is the vast rolling mills and arsenals now approaching completion in Hanyang, a city opposite Hankow, on the Han side, erected under the auspices of Chang Chi-tung, Viceroy of Hupeh and Yunnan. The plant covers about seventy acres, with a railroad one-and-a-half miles in length from the Yangtze River to the works, and thence to the Han River, with an incline from the top of the Yangtze bank to the water, where powerful machinery is located to draw the cars up a steep incline of about 300 feet to the level. The works were designed by an English engineer, on a most gigantic scale, and in their fitting-up nothing but the most modern and improved machinery has been imported, mainly from England. The buildings are, unfortunately, located in a valley liable to overflow, and their foundations have been raised fifteen feet, consisting of a bed of concrete made of brick, stone, and Portland cement, covered with a layer of earth, the whole of which was carried in baskets by coolies—the labour of thousands of men. The work was commenced in 1891. . . . If ever finished, it will be one of the most complete rolling mills in the world, as expense seems to have been a secondary consideration in the erection of this immense establishment. It is estimated by experts in such matters to have cost, so far, not less than \$3,500,000, and it will cost at least \$1,000,000 more to complete it. Once in operation, it is the intention of the Viceroy to manufacture everything in the iron line

—ordnance, rails, machinery, small arms, &c. The arsenals are about complete, and machinery will soon be set up for the manufacture of arms and munitions.¹ The average Chinaman looks on these modern wonders with stolid countenance, and turns away with the idea that the Viceroy must be hypnotized by the foreigner to put so much cash into an undertaking from which he can see no outcome, and this view is taken by some of the foreigners that have visited the works.

“Should the means of the Viceroy hold out, and the plant be successfully operated, it will prove a revelation to the natives of this portion of China, and do much to disabuse their minds of their own infallibility and convince them of the benefits to be derived from the genius and skill of the foreigner. It will stamp Chang Chi-tung as a public benefactor, and one of the most progressive mandarins of the Imperial Empire. The rails to be manufactured here will be used to construct a road to start some distance above Hankow, so as to get beyond the marshy ground of the lake country and the annual overflow, to connect with roads projected for the interior. It is asserted that work will commence on the contemplated road as soon as it is definitely settled that the Hanyang mills can supply the rails. Taken all in all, it is the most progressive movement so far made in China for the purpose of manufacturing arms, steel rails, and machinery, as the plant is a perfect one, and of a magnitude sufficient to require several hours to inspect it, even hastily.”

¹ The arsenal was unfortunately destroyed by fire soon after its completion.

APPENDIX F.

MINING AND CURRENCY.

*Edict by the Empress Regent regarding Currency reform, dated
February, 1887.*

THE Board of Revenue have presented a memorial requesting that all the provinces along the river and on the seaboard may be requested to convert into *cash* currency a certain portion of the subsidies they have to send to Peking.

In the 6th moon of last year, We directed I-huan, Prince Ch'un, to take the question of the system of *cash* coinage into careful consideration, in conjunction with the members of the Grand Council and the Boards of Revenue and Works, with a view to its gradual restoration to the old basis. In due course they submitted a Memorial, in which they requested that three years might be allowed in which to compass a steady restoration, and that the Governor-General and Governor respectively of Chihli and Kiangsu might first be called upon to buy additional machinery and engage in the manufacture of standard *cash*. Further, that those provinces which were required by law to manufacture standard *cash* should one and all be called upon to commence operations with all promptitude. Action was thereupon ordered to be taken in compliance with the above requests, and these being matters the conduct of which was entrusted to those concerned under special decree, was it not their duty to set to work with genuine energy in order to achieve successful results? The Board of Revenue is the focus to which the coinage system converges, and it was naturally their duty to take the lead

in urging the various provinces concerned to set to work conscientiously in considering plans of operation. And yet, after more than half-a-year has elapsed, they suddenly assert that the capital required for machinery and manufacture will be too large, and that the opening of *cash* foundries in the metropolitan mint is likely to cause suspicion and uneasiness in the public market. They accordingly make the request that Hupeh and other provinces may be called upon to send with their subsidies a certain amount of *cash* to Tientsin to be in readiness for use. The said Board never consulted with Prince Ch'un and the rest, but gave reckless heed to the statements of provincial high authorities and, with them, tried to get rid of the obligations imposed upon them; to such shallow and perfunctory subterfuges did they resort! The earlier Memorial dealt very explicitly with the question of the partial use of the *fang shih*, or metropolitan *cash*, in connection with the resumption of *chih ch'ien*, or standard *cash*. How comes it that directly the furnaces for the casting of this *cash* are set going, clamour will arise in the markets? Such expressions as these aggravate the impropriety of which the Board has been guilty.

Considerations of State economy have occupied attention of late. The development of copper and iron mining, for instance, is putting the resources of the country to practical use, and yet the Governors-General and Governors concerned have on many occasions acquitted themselves in a perfunctory manner; disposing of the subject in a single Memorial to the Throne, in which they state that the "matter is attended with many difficulties." Officials, metropolitan and provincial, are falling into chronic habits of dilatoriness and sloth, and do not give their whole minds to the consideration, or themselves to the honest execution, of the best expedients for securing the greatest profit: measures that are called forth by the exigencies of the times. More than this; they think that, under a pretext of working tentatively, they will prepare the way for getting quit of their responsibilities at a future date. Such confirmed habits as these are deserving of the deepest detestation. In sum, the old system will positively have to be restored, and the *cash* coinage must promptly be re-organized. Injunctions in this sense have been repeatedly issued, and yet the heads of the department concerned are unable to identify themselves with the intention of the Court to

enrich the State and benefit the people, and they make up pretexts for putting off what they should do. In this they are guilty of grave dereliction of the duties entrusted to them, and we command that the chiefs of the Board of Revenue be committed to the Board concerned, for the determination of a severe form of penalty. Their Memorial will be thrown back to them with contempt, and they are again called upon to submit with all despatch fresh proposals for putting the furnaces in work and arranging for the casting of coinage. One year will be allowed for giving full and consecutive effect to the measure, and no further delay will be permitted under pain of punishment—Tremble !

The above edict is designed to meet two purposes. It is an expression of opinion in favour of the necessity of Currency Reform, regarding which there was a strong movement at the time, as the *Peking Gazette* contains frequent memorials and edicts on the subject ; but to which opposition was evidently being offered by vested reactionary interests.

But it is also commonly cited as designed to express approval of Mining as a source of national wealth. Indications of the nature of the movement may be found in various memorials published about the same time in the *Peking Gazette*. Notably, the *Gazette* of the 15th February, 1887, contains a memorial from the Viceroy of Canton praying for a removal of existing prohibitions regarding the export of iron from the Two Kwang. This had been forbidden, hitherto, "with the object of preventing the furnishing supplies to pirates." But the condition of affairs was, he urged, very different now from what it was formerly when that prohibition was put in force. Besides, "foreign iron and steel are imported" to the value of large amounts. To hinder trade in Chinese iron is, therefore, one-sided and unfair ! It is simply "an obstacle thrown in the way of the development of mining," and "a source of profit lost to merchants and manufacturera." When he (the Viceroy) was Governor of Shanse he asked and obtained the removal of restrictions on the export of Shanse iron ; and he begs the same relief now, in respect of the Southern Viceroyalty.—The Imperial rescript grants his request.

APPENDIX G.

RISE OF COTTON MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY IN THE EAST.

Extract from a Paper by Mr. Geo. Jamieson, H.B.M. Consul at Shanghai.

WHILE old-established manufacturers in England are in many cases barely paying expenses, new and rival industries in the Far East are springing up broadcast, and in spite of inexperience and extravagance of management, are paying handsome returns to their owners.

In the report of the Yokahama Chamber of Commerce, dated May 15th, 1894, the following statistics are given. The first spinning mill in Japan was erected in 1863 with 5456 spindles :—

at end of 1883 there were 16 mills with	43,700	spindles
„ 1888 „ 24 „ „	88,140	„
„ 1892 „ 39 „ „	403,314	„
„ 1893 „ 46 „ about	600,000	„

The same report adds that a still more rapid increase is expected in the near future ; large orders, it is known, have been placed for more machinery, some for making yarns of the finer qualities.

In the Consular Report on trade at Hiogo for the year 1892, a return is given of the dividends paid during the preceding twelve months by twenty-one mills in Osaka. The average dividend was 8 per cent., the highest being 28 per cent., and the lowest

8 per cent. The dividends for 1893, as reported from time to time in the Japan newspapers, appear to be equally good or better. According to a recent number of the *Japan Gazette* eleven mills, whose names are given, paid an average dividend at the rate of 16 per cent. for the first six months of 1894, as compared with twelve per cent. for 1893.

Compare this with the accounts of the cotton trade in England, as given in the *Economist* of February 17th, 1894. I cannot afford room to quote passages, but briefly the balance sheets of ninety-three spinning companies in Oldham show a net total loss of 72,768*l.* in 1893, and a like net loss of 104,664*l.* in 1892. At the end of 1890 only eight of these companies had adverse balances, and these amounted to only 8412*l.* At the close of 1891 forty-nine had adverse balances amounting to 142,767*l.*, and at the close of 1893, sixty-three companies had realized a total loss on their working of 366,800*l.*

Surely there is something seriously alarming in these figures. Have our manufacturers, with all their accumulated wealth of experience, become so effete that they allow themselves to be beaten at their own trade by amateur spinners in Japan? Or is it not that there is some enormous advantage in the economic conditions of the two countries which enables the Eastern manufacturer to win without effort, while the Western is struggling his hardest to get even a place in the race? It has not unfrequently been said that it is some consolation to people in England, in the midst of all the depression of trade, to find that other countries, such as Germany and the United States, are in an equally bad condition. But this I venture to think exactly emphasizes my contention, viz., that the countries which are suffering, and which are bound to go on suffering by reason of the fall in silver, are the gold standard countries, and those that are reaping the benefit are the silver standard countries.

If India is pointed to as a silver-using country that is in an embarrassed condition, I would reply that the whole of her trouble comes from the fact of her owing a large foreign debt in gold, which is quite accidental. Had her debt been payable in silver, as it might have been, she would be in an excellent position. Taxation would have been light; trade and manufactures would have been increasing, as, indeed, they are; and all circumstances would have been favourable to the rapid accumulation of wealth.

China, which has hitherto lagged behind in the industrial race, is also waking up to the situation. At the present moment several large factories are being erected at this port, covering many acres of ground, and before another year is out probably two to three hundred thousand spindles will be at work.

Extract from a paper by Mr. Ourakami, in the "Economiste Français," with regard to the rise of cotton industry in Japan.

Between the years 1850 and 1858, a little before the opening of the country to foreign commerce, Japanese were aware that there existed in Europe an ingenious system of spinning cotton, and they desired to implant it in their own country. In 1875, during the voyage of Count Matsoukata, late Finance Minister, the Japanese Government bought through him several small machines for spinning cotton, and distributed them to the departments where the culture of this plant was undertaken, to show the inhabitants the new machines. This was really the point of departure to our present cotton industry, which has grown so enormously from year to year. At first only the coarser counts, No. 16, were undertaken, which supplied the place of those which had previously been made by hand in the country. From 1880 to 1884 cotton spinning became important and prosperous, and continued so up to 1889-90, when the want of money caused some hesitation in the advance, to be quickly overcome, however, when capitalists saw the profits to be made. Even then it was still the coarser counts up to No. 20 which were made. Meanwhile the foreign import continued fairly large, and the new industry about this time was not in too flourishing a condition. The trade sent two agents to India to study the question, and their reports were so favourable that they caused the courage of spinners in Japan to rise again. They studied the means of making the finer counts, procured better machines, commenced to purchase American cotton, and reduced in certain ways the cost of production: the result being that they obtained better returns, the proof of which is shown in the fact that the finer counts commenced to increase, whilst the import decreased. This is shown by the following figures:

			National Production in Japanese lbs.			Foreign Imports in English lbs.
1888	...	...	956,804	...	...	47,439,639
1889	...	...	20,952,687	...	...	42,810,912
1890	...	...	32,217,456	...	...	31,908,302
1891	...	...	45,306,444	...	...	17,337,600
1892	...	...	64,046,925	...	...	24,308,491

Extract from the "Economist" Trade Supplement of January 12th, 1895, regarding the cotton industry in England.

During the year a couple of Oldham companies have practically ceased to exist, the Grosvenor and New Earth, which are being wound up. The Lansdowne and Bankside Spinning Companies are still in voluntary liquidation, while the Ryecroft Mills Company, Ashton-under-Lyne, and the Middleton and Tonge Mills Company have gone into liquidation during the year. The following table comprises the results of ninety-four companies for the past year :—

			Spindles.			Capital.
Oldham (72)	...	...	5,584,557	...	...	5,068,780 <i>l.</i>
Ashton (7)	...	...	592,946	...	...	558,693 <i>l.</i>
Rochdale (15)	...	...	1,237,552	...	...	1,319,393 <i>l.</i>
			<hr/>		<hr/>	
			7,415,055		6,946,866 <i>l.</i>	
			Profit.	Loss.	Credit balance.	Adverse balance.
Oldham (72)	...	...	54,278 <i>l.</i>	61,277 <i>l.</i>	11,780 <i>l.</i>	359,013 <i>l.</i>
Ashton (7)	...	...	6,623 <i>l.</i>	1,152 <i>l.</i>	2,718 <i>l.</i>	10,239 <i>l.</i>
Rochdale (15)	...	...	16,635 <i>l.</i>	10,734 <i>l.</i>	25,812 <i>l.</i>	13,182 <i>l.</i>
			<hr/>		<hr/>	
			77,536 <i>l.</i>		40,310 <i>l.</i>	
			73,163 <i>l.</i>		382,434 <i>l.</i>	

The return of 100 companies in 1893 was :

Profit.	Loss.	Credit balance.	Adverse balance.
46,137 <i>l.</i>	...	106,615 <i>l.</i>	...
...	49,513 <i>l.</i>	...	364,377 <i>l.</i>

APPENDIX H.

THE PEI-T'ANG CATHEDRAL.

Decree by the Empress Regent, relative to removing the Pei-t'ang Cathedral at Peking.

LI HUNG-CHANG has memorialized Us to the effect that he has arranged with the French missionaries and Legation for the removal of the Cathedral near the Silkworm Lake from its present site. [This is the Cathedral usually called the Pei-t'ang.] This building was erected inside the Hsi-an Gate of the Imperial City with the sanction of the Emperor Kanghi, over a century ago, and the ecclesiastics connected with it have invariably conducted themselves peaceably, and recognized their indebtedness to the Imperial bounty. Last year, repairs to the precincts about the Southern Lake were begun, in order to prepare a place of retirement for H.M. the Empress Dowager. To make the required alterations, it became necessary to remove the French Cathedral, which was too close by for convenience. Li Hung-chang accordingly sent the Englishman, John Dunn, to Rome to arrange the matter ; at the same time the Commissioner of Customs Detring settled with the missionary Favier and the Consul Ristelhueber (?) the allocation of a new site where the building might be re-erected, viz., at the south end of the No-shih Treasury (?). The said missionary further undertook that the new building should not exceed fifty Chinese feet in elevation, being thirty feet lower than the old Cathedral ; likewise that the bell-tower should not project high above the main roof. Subsequently Favier proceeded, himself, to Rome and informed the head of the mission of the

agreement, and a communication in reply has been received expressing gratitude for the Imperial kindness in protecting French missionaries which Heaven would requite ten thousand fold. Despatches have passed between Li Hung-chang and the envoy Constans, the latter agreeing to the course proposed to be taken.

Let it therefore be done as suggested ; and let the expenses connected with the removal and rebuilding of the Cathedral be defrayed by the Imperial treasury.—*North-China Herald*.

APPENDIX I.

THE YELLOW RIVER.

Memorial by Wu Ta-cheng, Director-General of the Yellow River, proposing the establishment of a Board of Surveyors (1889).

AMONGST the ancients (says the Memorialist) the art of map-making never reached the state of perfection which it has attained in modern times. The charts which have been made of the sea-board and of the Yangtze have proved of the utmost service in carrying on the work of river and coast defence, and captains of steamers rely upon their charts as guides in determining their course through the ocean. In making a sketch of a mountain it is necessary to fill in the whole outline, and the ground covered by its base must be accurately surveyed in order to ascertain its dimensions; so in drawing up a chart of water the shoals and rapids must be marked and the configuration of the bed of the river must be accurately examined in order to ascertain its depth. In the case of the Yellow River a knowledge of the direction and windings of its course, and of its relative breadth at different points is an important element in arranging plans for its conservation. The charts hitherto made of the river have been mostly the work of Yamén underlings, and have merely given a rough outline without marking the degrees of latitude and longitude, or noting the distances. Memorialist has been at great pains to obtain the services of an expert in chart-making, but has completely failed to find one. There is no person amongst the officials or literati of Honan who possesses any exact knowledge of mathematics or surveying, and until a taste for these studies is introduced, no improvement can be expected in this respect.

Memorialist proposes, therefore, to establish in Kaifêng-fu a Board of River Surveyors, and with this object in view, he has written to the Viceroy at Tientsin and Canton, and the Superintendent of the Foochow Arsenal, asking them to select and send him twenty officers and students well acquainted with surveying and map-making. In this way he will have a complete survey made in sections, and an accurate chart drawn up and printed, of the whole course of the river from Wei-hsiang where it enters Honan, to its mouth at Li-ching in Shantung. This he considers the most important step in his task of reorganizing the river works. A mere glance at such a map will show at once the deflections of the course of the river, the breadth of the banks at different places, the points at which the force of the current is greatest, the sandbanks, the junction of its tributaries with the main stream, the trend of the hills on both sides and the distance from each other of the different towns and villages on its banks, while additional details can be filled in from time to time. As, however, the members of this new Board cannot be expected to come from a distance and undertake such a difficult task without some encouragement, Memorialist proposes, as soon as they have arrived, to forward a list of their names for record in the archives of the Board at Peking, and requests that they may be held entitled to the same rewards as those granted to officers employed inaugurating the telegraph service. The request is supported by the Viceroy Li and the Governors of Honan and Shantung.

Rescript by the Emperor : We sanction the transfer of a number of officials for the work of surveying and chart-making ; but as the proposed establishment of a Board of Surveyors and the consideration of the rewards to be conferred upon them is premature and ostentatious, We command that no notice be taken of the suggestion.

